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THE TIMES

No. 64,523

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 23 1992

45p

US threat to use cruise missiles against Serbs

By NICHOLAS WOOD
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AMERICA is prepared to launch cruise missile attacks on Serbian airfields to enforce the air exclusion zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Pentagon disclosed yesterday as the Western allies put the finishing touches to a draft UN resolution aimed at curbing Serbian aggression in the former Yugoslav republic.

The draft authorising military action could be ready today, and John Major told troops during a surprise visit to Bosnia yesterday that it would be put to the security council within days. "What is happening across Bosnia is not acceptable," he said. "We all know of the atrocities that are being committed and I think it has to be made clear that those aren't acceptable."

The prime minister hardened his stance against the Serbs as central European foreign ministers urged President Bush to take forceful action within a month or Sarajevo could fall. The Penta-

President Bush is to spend New Year visiting US troops in Somalia. The White House said yesterday he will stay overnight on December 31 to show "US concern for the people of Somalia, our commitment to humanitarian assistance and our support for American and UN forces".

Troops advance, page 8

gon is already refining plans for fighters and bombers to mount air patrols over Bosnia and for cruise missiles to be fired on Serbian runways if the Serbs continue to violate the "no-fly" zone.

Britain and France are reluctant, however, to allow allied pilots to shoot down Serb planes or to bomb airfields, and Germany is also taking a more cautious approach. Its diplomats asked Nato to delay sending the UN details of the alliance's plans while they checked how the strategy would be received in Germany, whose constitution forbids the deployment of its forces outside the Nato area.

Lord Owen, co-chairman of the Geneva peace talks on Yugoslavia, also advised caution, telling NBC television: "Pass the resolution this week by all means, but hesitate long and hard before you enforce, because it would gravely damage the whole humanitarian effort this winter."

During his day-long visit to the 2,400-strong British contingent in Bosnia yesterday, Mr Major emphasised the importance of the aid effort and promised that the troops' safety would be uppermost in his mind. He said he had gone to the battlefield to see the terrain and talk to commanders "so that I am in a far better

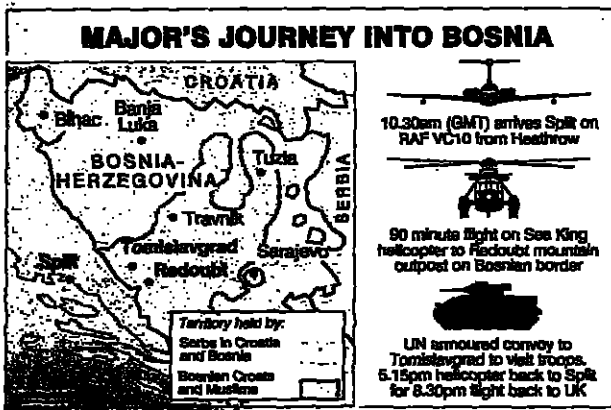


Christmas visit: John Major with Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, chief of the defence staff, in the Croatian town of Split yesterday

position to make judgments than before", but he made clear that tough action was almost inevitable when he said: "There is a security council resolution applying a 'no-fly' zone. I don't think we can allow that to be flouted."

Sir David Hannay, the British ambassador to the UN was last night involved in urgent talks in New York about the mechanics of enforcing the flights ban. The Foreign Office said Britain was seeking "maximum flexibility" while trying to restrain American hawkish. Under the terms of the draft being negotiated last night, the allies would be authorised to take "all necessary means" to enforce the ban. They would, however, have to clear action such as shooting down Serbian planes or bombing their airfields with Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

"We want to give them a free hand to do what they have to do, but not so free they can bomb the hell out of the Serbs without consulting the secretary-general," a Foreign Office official said. The resolution would also specify the date



from which the flight ban would be enforced, although the length of the deadline was still undecided. Michael Meacher, the shadow overseas development minister, called last night for a short deadline, claiming that the Serbs had had enough warning. He also said it was time seriously to consider air strikes against Serb artillery. Mr Meacher condemned Mr Major's visit to the front-line as a deplorable photo-opportunity.

The prime minister, wearing a black jacket under his wax jacket, had travelled by helicopter and Range Rover across mountains to reach the redoubt, a forward post about 50 miles from the Croatian border. He handed out pop music cassettes to the troops and told them: "There will be a lot more people who will see a lot more Christmas because you are sacrificing your Christmas here."

Rage as a weapon, page 6
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Princess misses Christmas morning with her children

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Princess of Wales will not be joining the royal family at Sandringham for the seasonal celebrations and will spend Christmas day morning without Prince William, ten, and Prince Harry, eight. The princess is expected to stay with Earl Spencer, her brother, and his family at Althorp House in Northamptonshire.

It had been thought that the princess would spend Christmas with her children, despite the announcement of her marriage separation. But yesterday's developments show the importance attached by the royal family to the status of the second and third in line to the throne.

The princess are to divide their time over the holiday

break between their parents, though royal sources are leaving the arrangements vague in an attempt to protect their privacy. The princess has constantly emphasised in her public comments the importance of maintaining the closest links with her children. The wrench is likely to prove painful for the princess, who is known to treasure every minute of her time with her sons.

Royal sources confirmed that the princess had been, and would continue to be, invited to family occasions at Sandringham and Balmoral. It is understood, however, that in view of the circumstances she decided it would be better to stay away from Sandring-

ham this Christmas. The Duchess of York, who separated from the duke this summer, will spend Christmas at Wood Farm, on the Sandringham estate, with Princesses Beatrice, four, and Eugenie, two. It is thought unlikely that they will attend the traditional church service and Christmas lunch at Sandringham, although the duke is expected to spend time with his family. The Queen also is known to want to see her grandchildren.

The royal party at Sandringham will include the Queen, who arrived on Sunday and recorded her Christmas message to the Commonwealth, the Duke of Edinburgh, the

Continued on page 2, col 4

Nervous Yeltsin cancels summit

FROM ANNE McELVOY
IN MOSCOW

AMID uncertainty over the future of his economic reforms, President Yeltsin yesterday withdrew from the Commonwealth of Independent States summit scheduled for Minsk on Christmas day. The gathering of leaders of ten former Soviet republics, called to discuss a charter on closer ties, has been postponed until next month.

Mr Yeltsin, who cut short his visit to China at the weekend, gave the official reason for his withdrawal as a mild cold, but he appears keen not to leave the Moscow area while there are doubts about the direction of the new government expected to be appointed today, with his approval, by Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister.

The cabinet announcement was due yesterday but was delayed, apparently by a last-minute wrangle over the posts and responsibilities of radical ministers. Pyotr Aven, the foreign trade minister responsible for rescheduling the former Soviet debt, resigned in a terse one-line message giving no reason. He is thought to have been sacrificed by Mr Yeltsin in return for other young liberals remaining in place.

Two other key reformist ministers, Anatoli Chubais, who is responsible for privatisation, and Aleksandr Shokhin, a deputy prime minister, both of whom are members of the "inner core" who launched the economic reform programme under Yegor Gaidar, Mr Chernomyrdin's more radical predecessor, retreated with Mr Yeltsin to his country residence.

Allies consulted, page 7

Holiday air crash kills 158 in Libya

By MIKE THEODOULOU

BRITISH workers heading home for Christmas are feared to have been among the 158 people killed when a Libyan Boeing 727 crashed on an internal flight from Benghazi to Tripoli yesterday. Libya said there were no survivors.

A Libyan Arab Airlines official said reports were being investigated that the jet collided in mid-air with a Libyan military aircraft whose crew parachuted to safety.

Libya's official news agency, Jana, did not identify the "several nationalities" on board, but large numbers of Britons, Italians, Germans and Americans work in the Libyan oil industry.

"The flight would have connected Benghazi with the hydrofoil from Tripoli to Malta, bringing people out for the Christmas holidays," the Foreign Office said. "It is possible there were Britons on the flight, though we have no confirmation."

Jana's report said the Boeing 727 crashed at 10.07 am local time. An airline official said it came down 35 miles south-east of Tripoli.

Libya has had only internal flights since April, when the United Nations imposed sanctions after Tripoli's refusal to hand over two men suspected of blowing up Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie four years ago. Monday was the anniversary of that bombing, in which 270 people died. Adding to the coincidence, the Libyan flight number was 1103.

The 3,600 Britons still in Libya have been advised not to use internal flights because of safety fears. Last month Libya said its aircraft were dangerously short of spares.

Sanctions discounted, page 9

Garel-Jones shocks MPs with decision to resign

By PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR

TRISTAN Garel-Jones, Foreign Office minister of state and one of the prime minister's strongest allies, will resign from the government next year after he has completed handling the Maastricht bill in the Commons. Friends and senior ministers said last night that his decision was entirely personal and did not reflect any differences over policy. His move to the back benches will, however, remove one of Mr Major's closest friends and shrewdest advisers. He has been a controversial figure with Tory Eurosceptics because of his vocal advocacy of the treaty.

The news stunned MPs. George Robertson, his Labour shadow on European affairs, described it as deeply puzzling. He said: "It will inevitably be seen as a victory by the Thatcherite Eurosceptics. Tristan Garel-Jones is a master of the political undergrowth, but an unlikely victim of the heat. A minister with one foot on the back benches is hardly the best pilot for the Maastricht bill through its five-month committee stage." William Cash, a leading Euro-sceptic, said it was difficult to see an important bill being handled by someone who is going to the back benches.

Mr Garel-Jones, who is 51, told *The Times* yesterday he had "never regarded politics as the central part of my life. I have never been a long distance runner in politics". He wanted to pursue personal interests, such as small family businesses in Spain, and his collection of modern Spanish paintings.

In an exchange of letters with the prime minister, he

recalled that he had asked Mr Major in summer last year "if, after the general election, I might be allowed to return to the back benches". He was asked to continue to see through the British EC presidency and the Maastricht bill.

He said it was certainly his wish to see the bill through, but Mr Major had known for some time "that I hanker after a change". Mr Major said he fully understood his reasons for wanting to step down "at a convenient moment. It is characteristic of you to wish to see through

Brittan takes on EC trade talks

SIR Leon Brittan, Britain's senior European Commissioner, takes over trade in a reshuffle by Jacques Delors, the EC president. Foreign affairs will be split between Sir Leon and Hans van den Broek. Page 9

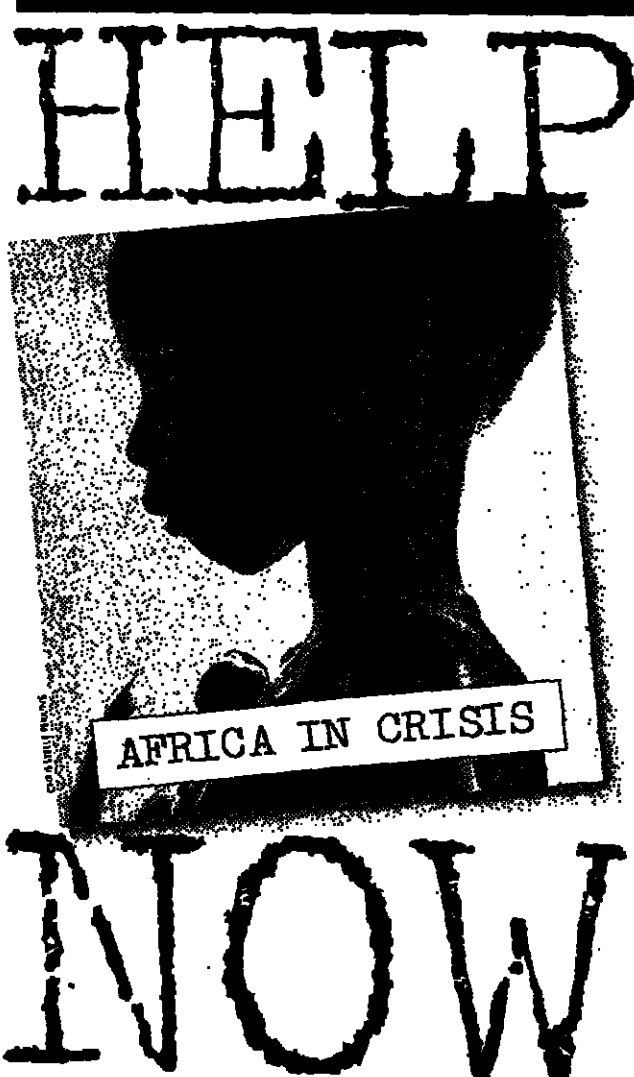
Leading article, page 13

the legislation you have been working on and it is what your colleagues would have expected of you".

Mr Garel-Jones's timing is a surprise, but yesterday he said he was fed up with keeping the secret and wanted to clarify the position.

His departure will trigger a ministerial reshuffle in midsummer or early autumn. His announcement follows confirmation yesterday that Mr Major is not planning an early reshuffle.

Arch-conspirator and Life at the top, page 4



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Refusal to resume production at ten mines 'is close to contempt of court'

Heseltine defiance on closures angers unions

By Jill Sherman
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE government and British Coal were heading for a further clash with miners last night as unions condemned Michael Heseltine's announcement that coal production would not resume at the ten doomed pits despite Monday's High Court decision that the decision to close all 31 pits was unlawful.

Private coal companies bid for pits on hit list

By Ross Tremain
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

FIVE of the ten pits earmarked for early closure by British Coal in October could be saved, according to independent experts.

Private mining companies have applied to take over two of the pits, while an independent study suggests that two South Yorkshire collieries could become profitable. Experts also say that Trentham, Britain's biggest mine, has large reserves and offers scope for efficiency improvements.

The growing evidence that some of the pits have been unreasonably condemned will add to the pressure on Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade.

The Department of Trade and Industry was yesterday seeking support from trade union leaders and other interested groups for the appointment of John T. Boyd, an American mining consultant, to conduct a study of the pits' prospects. Boyd would also ensure that British Coal keeps its promise to maintain the fabric of the mines so they could be reopened.

Union leaders say the condition of some of the mines has already deteriorated because of subsidence and roof falls, and that work needs to be quickly resumed at the nine pits already shut if the option of reopening is to be maintained. British Coal has taken mining equipment from some for use elsewhere, adding to the difficulty and cost of re-opening.

There may be objections to Boyd conducting an assessment on the grounds that the firm might have prejudged the issue. Last year, it was hired by the industry department to evaluate the prospects of 28 pits, including five of the ten earmarked for early closure.

A Boyd official, Ronald Lewis, was questioned about the findings by the Commons' trade and industry select committee last month. He told the

Mark Stephens, solicitor for the National Union of Mineworkers, immediately accused Mr Heseltine of being "close to contempt of court". Unions are now taking separate legal action in Nottingham over British Coal's decision to pay non-working miners only basic pay while the future of their pits is decided.

Sir Rhodes Boyson, Tory MP for Brent North told BBC's evening news that it was imperative that the government "gets it right this time". Mr Heseltine had to be fair to the miners, the country and the coal industry. "If the government doesn't do this it will be in very serious trouble in six weeks time."

One hundred and fifty miners turned up for work at Silverhill colliery in Nottingham, which is earmarked for closure but British Coal refused to let them into the pit, sending them home with a bottle of whisky and a Christmas bonus. All miners will stop work today for the Christmas break, unsure whether their jobs are still under threat.

Mr Heseltine is still hoping that the government's white paper on the future of the coal industry will be presented by the first week of February. British Coal said last night that it would alter its consultation procedure to ensure there was an independent element. Lord Justice Giddwell ordered that no

final decision be taken on closing the ten collieries until the unions and British Coal had agreed a review procedure for each pit, including independent scrutiny.

The company, which is still accepting miners' applications for voluntary redundancy, would also be looking at what Mr Heseltine has said about the consultants. British Coal is unsure if the company, which is already assisting the government in its review of the 21 pits, would be seen as sufficiently "independent" for the unions.

British Coal also had doubts last night about whether the consultation procedure could be completed by the January 29 deadline.

Bert Sage, branch secretary of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers said: "We won in the High court but this morning we are not allowed to work the coal. It is a bit of a hollow victory."

Mr Heseltine earlier announced that mining would not restart at the ten pits and this was not necessary under Monday's judgment. British Coal last night agreed the same line. "It is clear that there is no requirement to resume coal production (at the ten pits), nor is there a market for the output," said a spokesman. Production has stopped at all of the threatened pits, except Betws colliery in South Wales, which is expected to be mined till the middle of next

month. Arthur Scargill, NUM president said it appeared that Mr Heseltine would not accept the court judgement. "If he has any integrity he will resign."

Earlier Labour presented 14 sacks of petitions to 10 Downing Street demanding that the original plan to close 31 pits and axe 30,000 jobs be reversed.

Michael Heseltine's decision as environment secretary to close down the London Borough of Haringey's refuse collection service was overturned by the High Court yesterday. Judges ruled the closure, due to take effect in the new year, was legally flawed and must be reconsidered.

ROBIN MAYES



Support in the bag: Labour MPs Dennis Skinner, Robin Cook and Glenda Jackson deliver a petition against the pit closures to Downing Street

committee that some of the ten pits had prospects for improved productivity, but he was not convinced they could be made viable in the longer term.

The five pits in the first wave of closures examined by Boyd include Betws at Ammanford, Dyfed. It is the only one of the ten still working and now appears almost certain to survive. Ryan International, a private mining group based in South Wales, has applied to British Coal to take it over.

Malcolm Edwards, former commercial director of British Coal, has applied to take over and reopen Markham Main colliery near Doncaster. South Yorkshire. Mr Edwards is confident that he and his Australian backers can operate Markham profitably, producing 600,000 tonnes of coal a year to sell to domestic and industrial markets in place of Polish imports.

Independent experts suggest the potential viability of three other pits on the closure list merits careful assessment. Like Markham, the Grime-thorpe and Houghton Main

collieries produce high-quality coal. Half their production goes not into the power-generation market, where British Coal faces stiff rivalry from gas, but to industrial customers.

According to a study by Sheffield Business School for Barnsley Council, Grime-thorpe could make a profit immediately if kept in production.

Houghton Main, the report said, would take four years to break even and could be profitable in seven. The report concluded that the cost to the taxpayer of closing the pits would amount to £330 million over the next ten years. If retained, they would produce a net profit of £48 million.

Trentham in Staffordshire, where 1,544 miners produced 2.3 million tonnes of coal last year, has vast reserves of coal that should command a good price because of its relatively

low sulphur content. Productivity could be improved, say critics of British Coal. But the colliery's biggest problem is that much of its coal goes to the Fiddler's Ferry power station in Cheshire, which can easily be supplied with cheap imported coal from America or Australia.

The remaining mines, Vane Tempest in the North-East, Cotgrave and Silverhill in Nottinghamshire, and Taff Merthyr in Wales, appear to have fewer prospects of a long-term future.

bed cause of their high costs, geological problems or poor profitability. At the heart of the problem lies the question of the future size of the market.

Privatisation of the electricity industry some two years ago was accompanied by a series of moves designed to maximise returns to the Treasury and allow a gradual build up of competition.

Coal's market is shrinking fast. Unwanted coal is piling up at pitsides and power stations at the rate of a million tonnes a month. At the last count, Britain's coal mountain was 46 million tonnes.

The protected nuclear industry has the right to sell all the power it can produce. By improving efficiency, it has lifted its share of the market from 17 per cent to 20 per cent.

Also, the sub-sea power cable to France, conceived as a two-way device to help each country to cope with demand peaks, has turned into a one-way conduit for surplus French nuclear power.

And in an effort to cut costs, the two big power generators have begun experimenting with Orimulsion, a cheap mixture of bitumen and water, which could make their over-expensive oil-burning plants competitive.

Enlarging the market for British Coal is a matter of redressing market distortions. The first measure is internal: a drive to cut production costs below those of imports, so that

the company can compete effectively on price within five years.

But British Coal also needs help. The government could:

- resist proposals to extend the lives of Britain's ageing Magnox nuclear plants, adding five million tonnes a year to the coal market;
- ensure only economic gas stations can operate, adding 10 million tonnes;
- block the one-way French connection, adding six million tonnes;
- limit use of Orimulsion, adding three million tonnes;
- and support the maintenance of strategic coal stocks to ensure they are reduced only slowly.

In evidence to the industry department enquiry, the government has also been urged to halt construction of the Sizewell B nuclear plant.

Some combination of these measures is likely to be recommended by the select committee and adopted by the government in its white paper on energy markets, expected in early February.

Mining review, page 20

IRA bomb explodes in Underground

A small IRA bomb exploded on a platform at Hampstead Underground station in north London yesterday at the start of the evening rush hour. Several people were taken to the Royal Free Hospital suffering from shock but there were no serious injuries. The station is one of the deepest in the Underground system (Stewart Tindler writes).

Warnings had been received at the Press Association at 4.32pm from a man claiming to represent the IRA that bombs would explode at Hampstead and Archway stations, on separate branches of the Northern Line. A second warning was received by the Samaritans at 4.38pm. No time was given for the bombs and the device at Hampstead exploded at 4.43pm. Trains were halted on the Northern Line and traffic congestion built up as the areas around the stations were sealed off by police.

The bomb is the first direct attack on an Underground station in the present mainland campaign. Firebombs have been put on trains and three bombs have been found in the car parks of north London stations. Last week, two bombs exploded inside and outside the John Lewis department store in the West End.

Soccer arsonists jailed

Seven football supporters were jailed after setting fire to their rivals' ground when their team lost. The Bristol City supporters set alight Bristol Rovers' adopted ground in Bath after watching City lose at West Bromwich in 1990. The men, all from Bristol, had either admitted or been convicted last month of their parts in the fire. Christopher Green, 23, was jailed for nine months for conspiracy to commit arson. James Gidney, 23, Richard Holbrook, 21, Shaun Ford, 26, and Micheal Mullins, 28, were jailed for eight months for the same offence and Nicholas Lacey, 22, for seven months. Alan Hemmings, 26, was jailed for two months for assisting others in an arrestable offence.

BBC blamed for death

The parents of a teenager who hanged himself days after watching the television spoof *Ghastwatch* are continuing to blame the BBC for his death. A coroner yesterday recorded a verdict that Martin Denham, 18, of Nottingham, killed himself on November 5. He was found hanging from a tree with a length of hosepipe around his neck. A note in his pocket said: "Please don't worry - if there are ghosts I will be a ghost and I will be with you always as a ghost." His stepfather, Percy Denham, said: "He was a very nervous lad. He thought there were ghosts in our home." After the hearing, a BBC solicitor said that the corporation and the programme makers had expressed their sympathy.

Festive pay winners

Some workers who forfeit traditional family celebrations on Christmas day are compensated with four times their normal rate of pay, according to a survey published today. AA patrolmen do best with four times normal pay on Christmas day, while British Nuclear Fuels will pay double the normal rate plus time off in lieu. But Mike Smith, a spokesman for the TUC, said: "A Scrooge element does exist and people on low incomes are often expected to work for little reward." The survey, by Income Data Services, disclosed that most companies are not as generous about holidays and are reluctant to allow employees to carry over unused time off into the new year.

Opt-out enquiry starts

John Patten, right, the education secretary, yesterday ordered an enquiry into a local authority campaign against opting out at the prime minister's old school in Merton, southwest London. Parents at Rutish School voted against a proposal to opt out in a ballot held last month. But Mr Patten has accused the council of "telling porkies" to win a majority. The education department last night gave the council a fortnight to explain statements in a letter sent to Rutish parents by Sheila Knight, chairman of the education committee. Mr Patten has threatened to order that new ballots be held where he considers there have been irregularities in campaigning. Merton has strongly denied misleading parents and had already made its campaign material available for independent inspection. The proposal to opt out was defeated by 542 votes to 150.



Charges dropped

Prosecution officials have dropped charges against Ron McKay, a reporter for *Scotland on Sunday*, who was arrested after the paper carried articles investigating a break-in at Lothian and Borders police headquarters. Mr McKay was charged with reset, the offence of handling or seeing stolen property. The Crown Office said that it had dropped the charges after considering a "full report" from the procurator fiscal. There have been no charges in connection with the break-in, in which crime squad documents were stolen. *Scotland on Sunday* said yesterday: "It was absurd that this charge should ever have been made against a journalist pursuing legitimate enquiries."

Councillor admonished

The leader of the Tory group on Edinburgh District Council yesterday pleaded guilty to making nuisance telephone calls to her husband's former wife, Christine Richard, 49, of Edinburgh, admitted making six calls to Lady Angela Buchanan-Hepburn and her family at their home in Peebles from January to April this year. Mrs Richard was admonished by Edinburgh Sheriff Court, which means a note of the conviction is left on the record but there is no penalty. Depute-fiscal Isabel Clark said Lady Buchanan-Hepburn and John Richard were divorced in the early 1970s and there had been "some unpleasantness" between them. During the calls, nothing was said before the caller hung up.

Ice cream co-op planned

Workers made redundant at the Lyons Maid ice cream factory at Kirkby, Merseyside, plan to take over the business as a workers' co-operative. The 70 workers occupied part of the plant two months ago in protest at the closure. Nestle running part of the ice cream factory had been discussed. Last summer the Kirkby factory produced about three million ice lollies a week. Nestle acquired Clarke Foods, owner of Lyons Maid, from the receiver last month.

Ex-IRA man freed

Patrick Leo Nash, a former IRA member who claimed police officers repeatedly beat him up during interrogation, walked free from Belfast Crown Court yesterday after being cleared of 20 charges. Sir Brian Hutton, the Lord Chief Justice for Northern Ireland, said: "Even though I do not believe requires me to exclude them from evidence because I am not satisfied they were not induced by violence." The charges included aiding and abetting in the murder of a taxi-driver.

Police made £2,000 claim for keeping man in cell for day

By Michael Dynes, Whitehall Correspondent

POLICE forces charged the Home Office £30 in one case and £2,008 in another for keeping one man in the cells for a day, the government's spending watchdog has found.

Seven police officers could have been deployed for the £2,008 Dyfed-Powys levied. The same sum could have bought three nights in a suite at the Ritz.

Although one of the highest individual claims submitted to the Home Office, it is by no means isolated. West Yorkshire police, for example, charged the Home Office £1,803 a day for each of the 39 prisoners it held between June and August 1991, while Lancashire charged £1,176 a day for each of the 25 prisoners held in October that year.

By contrast, the 633 prisoners held by Surrey in June the same year cost just £30 each a day. It is not surprising then that questions have been asked this week by the National Audit Office, about the varying charges made by police authorities for holding prisoners until they can be found places in prison.

Sir John Bourn, the head of the audit office, has refused to give the Home Office accounts a clean bill of health because almost one third of the £94 million spent keeping prisoners in police cells during 1991-2 could not be properly accounted for.

The audit report also criticised the Home Office for failing to demand adequate proof that the money had been spent, and for not checking claims sufficiently before payment. All three issues are likely to be high on the agenda when the public accounts committee cross-examines Sir Clive Whitmore, permanent secretary at the Home Office in March.

High cost police authorities insist, however, that they are ill-equipped to cope with the demands placed on them, and that the charges submitted to the Home Office accurately reflect the costs of holding prisoners.

Dyfed-Powys, for example, says that four officers had been rostered to oversee the

arrival of four prisoners. In the event only one turned up, and the other three officers, all of whom were on overtime, could not be stood down at the last minute.

Moreover, rural police forces are rarely equipped with adequate custodial facilities and special arrangements have to be made.

Dyfed-Powys police said: "In these circumstances, close supervision is a constant requirement, and we cannot permit normal policing levels to be compromised." Consequently, extra staff are rostered, and the police authority has no inhibitions about passing on the full cost.

No evidence was produced by the National Audit Office to indicate that such claims had been inflated. What angered the auditors, however, was the Home Office's failure to question police authority expenses more rigorously.

"Despite wide variations in costs charged by different police authorities, the National Audit Office examination did not disclose a single case where a claim was adjusted in respect of manpower, food, medical or transport costs," the report said. "Even where much higher than average costs were challenged, the explanations given by police forces were invariably accepted and the claim met in full," it added.

Christmas without the princes

Continued from page 1 Queen Mother, the Prince of Wales, Prince William and Prince Harry, the Duke of York, Prince Edward, the Princess Royal, her husband Commander Tim Laurence and her children Peter and Zara, Princess Margaret and her children, Viscount Linley and Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones.

Although the princess was understood not to be planning to stay at Sandringham at any time, it is possible that she will visit the royal home in Norfolk, to pick up the princess so that they can spend time at Althorp, or to drop them off.

The Duchess of York is thought not to have received a formal invitation to spend Christmas at Sandringham House. Her separation from the duke is on a less formal basis than that of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and she has completely given up formal royal engagements since the summer.

The monarchy has become unduly focused upon the personalities of the royal family, John Habgood, the Archbishop of York, claims in *The Times* today. The Crown should be a constitutional safeguard against the accumulation of excessive power elsewhere in the realm, he says. Page 12

Widow, 99, dies after attack at rest home

By Lin Jenkins

A WOMAN aged 99 died in hospital yesterday after being attacked by an intruder as she lay in her bed in a council-run home. As police began a murder enquiry, the woman's daughter appealed to anyone with information to come forward.

Sarah Burke, who was two weeks away from her 100th birthday, died without regaining consciousness after being attacked at The Green residential home in Redruth, Cornwall, on Sunday. She was hit in the face, fracturing her jaw and cheekbone.

Police believe that the intruder was a burglar, although nothing was stolen. Initial forensic examination suggested that the killer left the ground-floor room through a window.

Mrs Burke's daughter, Doris Leverton, said: "My mother was a very gentle person but she was in a terrible state when I went to see her in hospital. She could not defend herself and it will take a long time for me to get over this."

"You always expect a parent to die sometime, but not like this. It was a horrendous attack on a little old lady in her bed and the terrible thing is that whoever did it could strike again."

"We are absolutely devastated. Someone has not only killed an old lady of almost 100 but they have also killed

an old lady with the mind of a child."

Mrs Leverton, 63, of Mount Hawke, near Redruth, appealed for anyone who knew the murderer to come forward. "Someone out there must know something. If they saw anyone in the area or running away from the home, or they know someone with bloodstained clothing, they should tell the police immediately. The person who did this must be caught and as soon as possible. If you had seen her in hospital as I did you would not believe how terrible the injuries were that she suffered."

Mrs Burke was a former mill worker who had been living at the home, run by the county council, since February.

Det Chief Supt David Hodson, head of Devon and Cornwall CID, said: "It could have been a burglary that went wrong, but it was still a vicious attack. Blood was spattered all over the room and it is likely the person responsible will have blood on their clothing, so I appeal to anyone who has seen another person with blood on their clothes to come forward."

"The public response has been good so far but I would appeal to people to take time out from preparing for Christmas and consider the enormity of this crime and help us in any way they can."

THE TIMES
Boy d
friend
to S
froze



Creator o
Dixon die
aged 78

Boy dies with friend he tried to save on frozen pond

By Geoff King

TWO schoolboys died yesterday after falling through ice on a frozen pond. Four firemen were being treated in hospital for hypothermia last night after trying to rescue the boys, thought to have been aged 14 and 15.

One of the boys was thought to have died after going on to the ice to try to rescue his friend. A third raised the alarm after seeing his two companions disappear into the freezing water near a housing estate in Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

The first firemen on the scene spotted one of the boys under the ice and struggled to reach him. John Cooke and Andrew Scarffe plunged into the ice but were forced out by the cold. Phil Lester and Paul Burr constructed a makeshift dinghy from firefighting equipment and made a second unsuccessful attempt to reach the boys.

Police divers eventually recovered the boys' bodies after they had been in the pond at Holme Brook Valley for an hour and a half. Efforts were made to revive them at the scene, but they were certified dead at hospital in Chesterfield. The four firemen were said to be in a satisfactory condition.

Divisional Officer Michael Ball, of Derbyshire fire service, described the efforts of men as "nothing short of heroic". He said: "One of the boys was still visible when the crews arrived. Two firefighters went into the water and made their way through the ice, breaking it on their way, to get to him. They were not successful, mainly because of the intense cold."

"They withdrew, then two other firefighters made their way across the water in a makeshift dinghy made out of a water dam — something like

a large paddling pool. They managed to get to the site where the boys were last seen and search under the ice but there was no sign." Another officer borrowed an inflatable dinghy from a local shop and the firemen searched again, but without success.

Mr Ball said that the whole lake had been frozen except for a hole in the middle. "What probably happened was that one lad went on to the ice and fell through. The other then tried to reach him and also fell in. The third went to fetch help."

A friend of the boys, who said he saw what happened, said one had disappeared under the water while the other managed to keep his head above. A passer-by had waded in up to his chest and thrown a life buoy towards the boys but had to turn back when he got into difficulties.

The pond, 100 yards wide and about 20ft deep, is on a former open-cast mining site being converted into a park by Chesterfield Borough Council. It borders the Holme Hall estate and is a popular play area for children.

Bill Flanagan, leader of the council, said that park rangers had turned several children away from frozen stretches of water yesterday. He added: "We erected warning notices as soon as the ice formed on Monday, telling people to keep off. Our safety precautions followed guidelines laid down for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, including provision of life-belts. We strongly urge parents to impress on their children the importance of staying away from frozen ponds and lakes."

Details of the dead boys were not being released until relatives had been told.

Private eye who stole letters fined

By A Staff Reporter

A PRIVATE detective who stole bags of refuse from outside the house of the managing editor of *The Sunday Times* was yesterday found guilty of theft.

John Reilly, 47, of Twickenham, west London, was looking for letters addressed to Roger Eglon and sold them to another private detective earlier this year. Isleworth Crown Court was told. Reilly was fined £150 with £50 costs.

Mr Eglon, an aviation specialist, had told the court that he believed the theft was part of an industrial espionage campaign being waged by British Airways against its rival Virgin Atlantic Airways.

However, Judge Marder said the only issue for the jury to decide was whether Reilly knew he was doing wrong in taking the refuse without permission.

Sentencing Reilly, he said: "You are in no way the prime mover in what happened that night."

Afterwards, Reilly said that he had been left to "carry the can" in a case which had wider implications, but he would not comment further.



Prolific screenwriter Lord Willis in 1963

Creator of Dixon dies aged 78

By Alison Roberts Arts Reporter

LORD Ted Willis, the writer who created the archetypal British bobby, Dixon of Dock Green, died suddenly yesterday. Lord Willis, aged 78, collapsed from a heart attack at his home in Chislehurst, Kent, after collecting his morning newspapers.

Listed by the *Guinness Book of Records* as the most prolific writer for television, he wrote 34 stage plays and 39 feature films, including the award-winning *Woman in a Dressing Gown*.

Dixon of Dock Green ran for 21 years on the BBC and was a gentle precursor of later crime programmes. Lord Willis was working on a new series of his most loved creation when he died. Born in Tottenham, north London, Lord Willis was the fourth of five children in a working class family. He left school at 14, beginning a 50-year writing career after military service during the war. He was known as a pioneer of the fifties-style kitchen-sink drama, but refused to be classed as an "angry young man". In 1963, he was elevated to the peerage as Lord Willis of Chislehurst. A life-long socialist, he became an active member of the House of Lords on the Labour benches.

The crime writer H. R. F. Keating paid tribute yesterday. "Warmth, compassion, responsibility: these are the words that spring to mind when one thinks of Ted Willis... A man to miss."

Obituary, page 15



Christmas contrast: Natasha Mihaljevic, 10, will spend her first traditional English Christmas in a Surrey village after being smuggled out of Sarajevo by the ITN reporter Michael Nicholson in July. Mr Nicholson, right, and his wife Diana, who live in Grayswood, Surrey, are investigating the possibility of adopting the girl, although it is illegal to adopt a child over the age of five under Bosnian law. "I've met her aunt and uncle and we will advertise in Bosnia and Croatia for her mother to come forward — if she's still alive," Mr Nicholson said. He added that Natasha might wish to return to Sarajevo. The girl spent last Christmas with 200 other children in an orphanage, where her single present was a toy deer. "It's going to be very different for her this year," Mr Nicholson said. "She's incredibly excited. Every night before she goes to bed she dives under the Christmas tree to see if any more presents have arrived for her." Like most children,

Natasha has been delightedly opening the windows of her first Advent calendar, has taken part in the school nativity play and even seen a pantomime, *Aladdin*. On Christmas day, after opening her presents in front of the fire, she will attend the local church with the Nicholsons and their two sons, Tom, 20, and William, 19.

Drink-drive message fails to reach 1 in every 12 tested

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

SENIOR police officers last night expressed disappointment as the first returns from the pre-Christmas drink-drive purge showed almost one in twelve motorists breathalysed was over the limit. The ratio was the same as last year.

Police forces in England and Wales carried out 13 per cent fewer tests this year because officers were involved in countering the IRA's mainland bombing campaign.

Figures released by the police showed that there were

1,367 positive tests out of 17,528 motorists breathalysed between 6am on December 19 and 6am yesterday. Walter Given, chairman of the Association of Chief Police Officers' traffic committee, said: "This is disappointing as police administered 13 per cent fewer breath tests than the comparable period last year, not least because of the security duties in the run-up to Christmas."

"He said more work needed to be done by the government, courts and police to deal with

hard-core drink drivers. The association believed that drivers caught for the second or third time with high levels of alcohol should be brought before a court as early as possible. If magistrates granted bail, they should insist that the motorist did not drive until the case was over.

The statistics from all 43 forces in England and Wales show that the number of motorists testing positively remains at almost 8 per cent, the same as last year. The total breath tests carried out was 17,528, against 20,245 in 1991 and 27,758 in 1990. The tests gave positive results for 1,367, compared with 1,686 last year. Mr Given added that the only encouraging figure was a reduction of 10 per cent in injury accidents.

The campaign produced mixed reports from forces across the country. Police in Hertfordshire breathalysed 174 motorists, with 11.5 per cent found over the limit. A force spokesman said: "It is still the case that there are a number of people ignoring all the advice they are given about drinking and driving."

Last night, the Campaign Against Drink-Driving called for random breath tests. Harry Cape, a spokesman for the group, said the figures would drop sharply if police were able to test motorists at will. "At the moment, motorists are prepared to take a chance."

The government's £1.5 million Christmas drink-drive campaign was launched earlier this month with a television commercial so hard hitting that it could not be screened before 9pm.

There are about 95,000 drink-drive convictions each year in England and Wales. Deaths caused by drink-driving have fallen from about 1,500 a year in the early 1980s to 700 in 1991.

Total breath tests in first period of Christmas drink-drive campaign			
Total positive tests in brackets			
Force	1991	1992	
Avon & Somerset	323 (28)	225 (28)	
Bedfordshire	168 (18)	146 (17)	
Cambridgeshire	306 (16)	426 (12)	
Cheshire	279 (31)	197 (16)	
City of London	15 (2)	45 (5)	
Cleveland	207 (22)	119 (8)	
Cumbria	202 (19)	184 (10)	
Derbyshire	171 (18)	74 (4)	
Devon & Cornwall	387 (25)	345 (41)	
Dorset	115 (15)	222 (21)	
Durham	151 (26)	281 (23)	
Dyfed-Powys	231 (17)	156 (14)	
Essex	732 (40)	1,030 (44)	
Gloucestershire	283 (27)	156 (11)	
Greater Manchester	1,422 (145)	1,350 (145)	
Gwent	187 (18)	202 (10)	
Hampshire	887 (58)	546 (35)	
Hertfordshire	282 (14)	174 (20)	
Humbly Grove	156 (28)	154 (18)	
Kent	1380 (53)	723 (34)	
Lancashire	438 (48)	449 (26)	
Lincolnshire	376 (28)	286 (11)	
London	358 (17)	312 (15)	
Merseyside	159 (27)	132 (34)	
Metropolitan	4,058 (250)	3,172 (244)	
Norfolk	1,085 (28)	625 (17)	
Northamptonshire	271 (14)	222 (7)	
Northumbria	195 (46)	107 (32)	
North Wales	453 (20)	357 (21)	
North Yorkshire	243 (22)	180 (15)	
Nottinghamshire	176 (24)	154 (15)	
South Wales	732 (52)	855 (37)	
South Yorkshire	387 (26)	257 (37)	
Staffordshire	283 (25)	174 (25)	
Suffolk	259 (22)	205 (20)	
Surrey	436 (29)	287 (10)	
Sussex	380 (45)	243 (22)	
Thames Valley	810 (37)	1,332 (37)	
Warwickshire	58 (18)	98 (11)	
West Mercia	291 (38)	422 (35)	
West Midlands	412 (34)	335 (30)	
West Yorkshire	493 (29)	482 (26)	
Wiltshire	342 (17)	241 (20)	
Total	20,245 (1,886)	17,528 (1,367)	

All figures for period 6am 19/12 to 6am 22/12
Source: Association of Chief Police Officers

Experts at odds on motorway madness

By Michael Horsnell

A CHANGE of public attitude to driving in fog was called for yesterday by the Automobile Association to combat "the killing season" on Britain's roads.

Andrew Howard, head of road safety at the AA, said: "In the same way that we have educated people not to give a driver an extra drink or any drink at all, we should educate society not to put pressure on him to be in time to meet an appointment when it is foggy. Drivers are put under pressure. That is evident from the fact that multiple pile-ups generally occur on weekday mornings. There is a link between that time of day in the week and the killing season."

But as fog and frost threatened to persist today, Ivan Brown, assistant director of the Medical Research Council's applied psychology unit at Cambridge, described "motorway madness" as a genuine problem resulting from fog distorting a driver's perception of speed and risk.

The perception of speed is

usually a subconscious process based on visual cues from the roadside, and without those cues the driver might think he was not driving fast enough. Professor Brown said: "People are not good at sensing how dangerous it is to drive at the speed they do in fog. They ignore warnings because they feel they are in control. They rely on their senses to judge a safe speed but their senses are unreliable in fog."

Appeals to "watch your speed" were dangerous, he said, because the time taken to check a speedometer can eliminate a driver's safe stopping distance.

The bad weather on Monday led to the busiest day on record for the AA breakdown service, with 7,429 calls.

Up to 20 vehicles were involved in a multiple pile-up that injured six people on the M6 in Cheshire yesterday only hours after police warned motorists to stay at home because of freezing fog.

Leading article, page 13

CHRISTMAS WITH THE TIMES

The Times will be the only quality national newspaper on sale on Boxing day — and with four sections it will offer a feast of good reading as well as a host of tips on how to survive the rest of the Christmas season.

The Saturday Review assesses 1992 and selects the images that capture the spirit of an annus horribilis. Jonathan Meades sets a quiz for foodies. Melinda Witstock sees ominous signals from the new ITV, and Weekend reports on the plight of Bosnia.

Whether it is how to keep the children entertained, cures for hangovers, what to do with the leftovers, records of the year or where to find the sales, Weekend has the answers, as well as a game of political snakes

Saturday Review



and ladders and a special offer of a £1,932 saving on transatlantic flights.

With all this, plus Simon Jenkins, Clement Freud and the best team of columnists in Saturday journalism, The Times will be essential reading. Order your copy from your newsagent.

TOMORROW

An eight-page section with full television and radio listings for three days and our critics' choices of the best films and music will be published with The Times tomorrow.

There is also a new short story by Barry Unsworth, joint winner of the 1992 Booker Prize, as well as a jumbo crossword.

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS



SINGLE HIGHLAND MALT SCOTCH WHISKY.

GLENMORANGIE

JOHNNY URQUHART, Head Cooper.

HAVING TOILED ALL WEEK — and sometimes all weekend — upon the oaken casks which impart the buttery translucence and flowery nose to the malt, our Head Cooper heads for the river on a Friday afternoon. Here, by the ruddy reaches of the Carron, he pits his wits against the salmon heading upriver, notes the flowers along the bank and the birds of the river, and forgets even his beloved barrels as he fills his mind with the sound of "the water tickling away."

And though he may return to Glenmorangie empty-handed, the skill and patience of the craftsman shine through in his explanation. "Simply catching fish," he will tell you, "is not necessarily the object of the exercise."



HANDCRAFTED by the SIXTEEN MEN of TAIN.

Sindy's facelift ends battle of the dolls

By Kate Alderson

THE grown-up world of plastic surgery and breast reshaping at last reached Toytown yesterday when Sindy agreed to have a facelift to make her look less like Barbie.

Hasbro Industries, the British maker of Sindy, has agreed to change the way she looks after Mattel threatened a multi-million dollar legal action because, they said, Sindy had been remodelled on their doll, Barbie.

Mattel believed Barbie's glitzy lifestyle of fast cars, male dolls and short skirts appealed more to children than the traditional Sindy who was more interested in horses and perhaps less in fashion.

The market at stake is huge. Sindy has annual sales worth £7 million, while Barbie's may be worth \$1 billion this year. In 33 years, 600 million Barbie dolls have been sold around the world.

The action could have resulted in Sindy dolls being taken off the shelves. In



Sindy, left, and her alleged role model, Barbie

France earlier this year, a toy distributor had his stock seized after a French court decided Sindy had violated the Barbie copyright.

The legal wrangle, which was due to be heard at the High Court in London next month, began when Sindy suddenly lost her puppy tail, her breasts swelled and her face was resculpted. Mattel said Hasbro was in breach of

Sindy and Barbie around the world.

Barbie was born in 1959 and two years later her boyfriend Ken came along. Five million wedding dresses have been sold although there is no evidence of a marriage.

According to Mattel, Barbie has more shoes than Imelda Marcos, 1 billion more outfits than any model, 120 a year at the last count; more image changes than Madonna, 500 so far; and more facelifts than most Hollywood stars.

Early this year Barbie was censored by the American Association of University Women because she kept saying "maths class is tough."

Mattel agreed to change Barbie's lines and now she reveals ambitions such as "I'm studying to be doctor."

The doll is sold in 100 countries and along the way Barbie has acquired 66 additional family, friends and pets. The latest creation, Totally Hair Barbie, with locks flowing to her shoes, is expected to pull in \$100 million.

Files disclose UK's role in Cuban crisis

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOCUMENTS detailing the Macmillan government's secret offer to help the United States to overthrow Fidel Castro's communist regime in Cuba 30 years ago will be released today by an organisation campaigning for freedom of information.

The papers on the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and the Profumo affair are readily available in the United States, although they remain locked away in British archives.

They disclose secret negotiations between the two governments over the possible use of a British base for launching airstrikes against Cuba and the hunt by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for American citizens who could be drawn into the Profumo affair.

The Campaign for Freedom of Information is using papers released in America to underline the need for "right to know" legislation in Britain. It argues that such documents give the American people an insight, denied in Britain, into their history.

The Cuba papers show that American officials ap-

proached the British government in 1961 for permission to use Mayaguana island airfield in the Bahamas if necessary as a base for launching tactical air strikes against Castro. The British government consented on condition that its role was kept secret.

After Castro came to power in January 1959, the US government drew up military strategies for invading Cuba and overthrowing the regime. In April 1961, a US-backed invasion force was forced to surrender to Castro's troops when attempting to land at the Bay of Pigs. The British government was then approached, via David Bruce, who was US ambassador in London, for permission to use Mayaguana. Mr Bruce was asked to gauge reaction and to find out what the British might want in return.

After Soviet nuclear missiles were stationed in Cuba, a US file shows that Britain agreed on condition that nothing was put in writing and facilities at Mayaguana were not put to active use without prior agreement.

The campaign says it has a

number of other documents, including FBI files on investigations into American citizens linked to the Profumo affair and records of negotiations in the mid-1970s over granting Concorde landing rights in New York and Washington.

Some documents will be declassified in Britain's public records office on January 1 under the 30-year rule. Far greater public access, similar to the US, would be given under the "right to know" bill, introduced by Mark Fisher, Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central, which will be debated in the Commons on February 19.

Maurice Frankel, the campaign's director, commented: "The annual opening of the 30-year-old files in the public record office only emphasises how long we have to wait for information which could safely have been released a decade earlier. The US Freedom of Information Act is still a major source of information about British history, even about our safety. We still have to rely on the openness of other governments to reveal what our own government keeps secret."

Minister's resignation: Major loses a shrewd and trusted adviser

The arch-conspirator who tired of keeping a secret

By PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR



The player: Tristan Garel-Jones loved political game

SO CONSPIRATORIAL is Tristan Garel-Jones's reputation that last night's news that he will leave the government next year prompted immediate comparisons with Talleyrand's comment on the death of an early 19th century ambassador: "What does he mean by that?"

In Mr Garel-Jones's case, the story for once appears to be straightforward. He decided a couple of years ago that he wanted to step down as a minister, though not as an MP, to pursue other interests. In the summer of 1991, he told John Major, who persuaded him to stay on as Foreign Office minister to see through the British presidency of the European Community and the Maastricht bill.

The timing is nonetheless odd. Although the presidency will be over on December 31, the bill faces a lengthy committee stage. But Mr Garel-Jones was fed up with keeping his secret.

His departure has a significance way beyond his position

as a middle-ranking minister. During more than eight years in the whips' office and two and a half in the Foreign Office, he has had influence in 10 Downing Street. He has become a bogeyman for the anti-EC right, in part because of his barely disguised contempt for many of them.

That has partly been a tribute to his skills as a behind-the-scenes fixer. He foresaw the trouble that Baroness Thatcher was in after Sir Anthony Meyer's trial run against her in December 1989, but had left the whips' office three months before the November 1990 battle. As a whip he was suspected by many on the right of advancing the careers of close friends in the Blue Chip dining group, such as Chris Patten, William Waldegrave and Mr Major. This suspicion was always exaggerated.

Mr Garel-Jones saw as early as 1988 that Mr Major rather than Mr Patten was the most likely member of his generation to become Tory leader because he appealed not only to the traditional centre but also to some of the non-Oxbridge, non-public school Thatcherites of a similar social background. When the contest came, he backed Douglas Hurd, his department head,

though relations with Mr Major remained warm.

Since he moved to the Foreign Office in July 1990, Mr Garel-Jones has been closely involved in the Maastricht negotiations. His pro-EC stance is one of the few subjects on which he has publicly known views, and has earned him enemies. Otherwise, he has been the operator who loves the political game for its own sake.

But for all his assiduity, disguised behind a casual facade, he has never regarded politics as the central part of his life. He always goes to Spain during parliamentary recesses, as he did again yesterday. His family has a language school in Madrid and his wife is Spanish. He wants to resume his serious interest in books and modern Spanish painting, and his business interests in Spain.

Mr Garel-Jones said yesterday that he never regarded himself as a long-distance runner in politics. His departure underlines the impact on ministers of one party being in office for a long time and, after the departure of Mr Patten, removes another of the prime minister's shrewdest and most trusted advisers.

Garel-Jones quits, page 1

Daily grind of life at the top breaks all but strongest

Ministerial life with its exhausting work schedule and scant social life is far removed from its glamorous image, writes Sir Robert Rhodes James



It is one of the most persistent myths, much favoured by even the best informed political commentators, that politicians crave office and, if they achieve it, cling to it tenaciously, come what may.

The reality is that there are many who do not seek it at all, and others who find the reality is quite different to what they had expected.

The unceasing delivery of boxes packed with papers that have to be read; the endless meetings and committees that must be attended, in Whitehall and Westminster; a long list of unadvertised engagements, lunches and dinners, the very dubious joys of official travel; seeing off, sometimes daily, the hostile opinions of opponents (not only to be found on the official Opposition benches) and the press; the entirely false respite of the weekend, when angry constituents need to be mollified; the calls for television and radio interviews at ridiculous hours, and the chief whip commanding presence for some obstreperous backbench party committee and crucial votes at the end of a long, long day.

Backbenchers with a small government majority do not enjoy much social life. For ministers and their families it becomes a distant memory. To all this has been added, for several ministers, the almost intolerable physical and mental demands of Europe, hurrying out to airports, staying in what seem identical hotel bedrooms, regardless of the location, mastering hurried briefs, listening to simultaneous translation of various versions of the *perfidie Albion* variety, fighting their corner, and then back to the airport and Westminster for another vote on something or other.

And then there are the proliferation of Commons select committees, the invention of Lord St John of Fawley in 1979 which may be considered an Act of Providence by ambitious backbenchers and the Opposition, but an instrument of the Devil by ministers and officials. One's views on the importance of effective and persistent parliamentary scrutiny of the executive change mightily when the eager backbencher becomes the weary minister on the receiving end of what he now considers to be a singly ill-informed and impertinent questioning by a bunch of publicity-crazed, self-important, and unfriendly nincompoops.

This is not a caricature of the average ministerial life. The wonder is not that many ministers, and their spouses, decide that it is an abjectly ill-paid and ill-rewarded existence in all other respects as

well and get out while their health and sanity are in reasonably good shape, but that there are others who actually thrive on it.

There is something in the old Whitehall view that a Happy Minister is a Good Minister and that an Unhappy one is not. As *The Battle of the Memoirs* develops, it is now clear to a wider public that serving under Mrs Thatcher was to most of her ministers a kind of living hell. The fascination of Nigel Lawson's memoirs in particular is how admiration and affection degenerated gradually into a wary modus vivendi, ended by something approaching hatred. He became terminally fed up and, disillusioned and betrayed, got out. Her abominable personal treatment of Sir Geoffrey Howe was to rebound spectacularly when he also, had had enough.

But the voluntary departures under Thatcher were largely for personal reasons that involved her personality and methods.

When John Major took over, everything changed magically. "For the first time" one minister told me a week after Mr Major took over, "I am actually enjoying being a minister." Unfortunately, the pressures of the job do not diminish, however agreeable the personality of the prime minister.

When Anthony Eden became foreign secretary for the third time in 1951 he found that while his power had fallen as Britain's had, the Foreign Office workload was greater than ever before. He then realised why it had broken Ernest Bevin's health and Herbert Morrison's ambitions of becoming prime minister. It did nothing for Eden's health either.

In recent times, I have never seen anyone age so rapidly in office as poor Brynmor John, to the point that I was amazed he was actually younger than me. His early death, which I lamented much, owed much to his torrid period as a minister. But he was by no means the only casualty.

I do not know the reasons that prompted John Nott and others and recently George Walden, Nigel Forman, and now Tristan Garel-Jones to decide that there are more important things in life than being an exhaustive Aunt Sally, but I can well understand why, in the American phrase, they wanted out.

If it is any consolation to them there have been prime ministers who came to the same conclusion. Sir Robert Rhodes James is the former Conservative MP for Cambridge.

FOR SCHOLARS: ENCOURAGE A BROAD AND ALWAYS OPEN MIND

FOR RELATIVES: SHOW THAT YOU CARE ENOUGH TO LET THEM MAKE THE CHOICE

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FOR CHILDREN: HELP THEM TOWARDS THE BEGINNINGS OF WISDOM

Sacked trust manager had quit twice over allegations

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

THE manager of a hospital trust sacked for alleged sexual harassment had twice resigned from other hospitals while under investigation for alleged misdemeanours.

The chequered career of Kieron Stanley, dismissed from his post as manager of St Lawrence's hospital for the mentally handicapped in Croydon, south London, on December 11, has raised questions about the lack of controls on hospital trusts.

Allegations about Mr Stanley had been known to the health department since 1987 but his career continued to thrive. South West Thames regional health authority said that it was powerless to intervene since St Lawrence's was an independent trust.

Malcolm Wicks, Labour MP for Croydon North West, tabled a motion in the Commons demanding an investigation into the trust by Virginia Bottomley, the health secretary, "given the evidence of clear nepotism, the failure of the trust's board to safeguard staff and patients' interests, an alleged climate of fear, and the case of sexual harassment".

Mr Stanley, 42, was sacked 12 days ago after he failed to attend a disciplinary hearing into allegations that he "put pressure on a female member of staff", according to the man who has shepherded his career for the past ten years. He is Ian Semple, chief executive of the Life Care Trust, which runs services for the mentally handicapped in Croydon. Mr Stanley, a long-time friend, had "created a situation which was unacceptable to me", Mr Semple said, but he would not detail the allegations.

Mr Semple first employed Mr Stanley in the early 1980s as director of nursing services at Warrington Park psychiatric hospital, Croydon. Mr Stanley was suspended from that job in April 1986 for reasons that have never been made public but Mr Semple wrote him a reference for a

similar post at a hospital in north Staffordshire, described as "glowing" by Clare Howell, the present chief executive of the district health authority.

In 1987, after Mr Stanley had changed jobs, north Staffordshire learnt that he had been under suspension in Croydon and he resigned.

The authority complained to Croydon that his reference had not mentioned his suspension and accused Mr Semple of "gross professional misconduct". Ms Howell said: "If it had just been a case of inadequate references it would have blown over but Mr Stanley caused us a great deal of anguish. The authority was absolutely incensed by the actions of Mr Semple."

When Mr Semple was contacted at his office at St Lawrence's by *The Times*, he said that a reference should not mention unproven allegations. "If a case hasn't been proved you have to be very careful what you say or you can get nailed for it."

An enquiry set up by Croydon health authority concluded, however, that Mr Semple should have told north Staffordshire that Mr Stanley was under investigation, although the omission did not amount to professional misconduct.

Last year, Mr Semple again hired Mr Stanley, who had not worked in the National Health Service in the interim, this time as manager of St Lawrence's. "I took him on based on my knowledge of him because I thought he was one of my best managers," Mr Semple said. "I found him guilty of sexual harassment but in terms of management of the care of clients he was exactly what the organisation wanted." He said the trust board had investigated the appointment and approved it.

Asked if it were true that he gave jobs to his friends, Mr Semple said: "It is not just a case of Ian Semple saying all these people can have these jobs. If you don't make the grade you go under."



Glorious history: John Humphreys in front of the stage at the Adelina Patti Theatre, where Victorian high society gathered

Castle launches appeal to save Victorian diva's legacy

By TIM JONES

OPERA fans around the world are being asked to raise £1.5 million for renovations to a castle once owned by a flamboyant Victorian diva.

Adelina Patti, whose voice financed an extravagant lifestyle, fell in love with Craig-y-nos after she left her first husband, the Marquis de Caux, an equerry to Napoleon III. In the wilds of Wales, near Abercraf in Powys, she set up home with Ernesto Nicolini, an Italian opera singer, and spent much of her fortune transforming the building into a Gothic and Italianate extravaganza.

Her tiny frame produced the purest coloratura voice and she explored her talent ruthlessly to demand unheard-of fees of £1,000 a performance. Verdi thought she had no equal and said she was his first, second and third favourite prima donna. The consortium owning the castle hopes that its greatest days of

Victorian opera can be recreated in a musical centre to rival Glyndebourne.

When Patti was not entertaining high society, including the Prince of Wales, she would sometimes instruct the staff to dress up, order her butler to break open the champagne, and dance and sing before them. They paid nothing to hear her perform.

Other extravaganzas included building her own railway station to give better access to Craig-y-nos — it means Rock of the Night — and she employed one maid solely to look after her pet dogs. But her greatest innovation was creation of the Adelina Patti Theatre, which is now restored and used to stage opera and other events.

After Nicolini died in 1895, the Madrid-born diva married Baron Cederstrom and she lived in the castle until her death in 1919.

The present consortium has

spent £500,000 renovating it but the upper floors and fabric of the building are threatened with decay. John Humphreys, one of the directors, said the castle was paying its way as an arts and functions centre, but margins were too tight to complete renovation.

The local businessmen bought the estate six years ago when it was feared it might be turned into an hotel. Mr Humphreys said: "We are all fans of Madame Patti and do not take income from the project but we need more help."

"I dread to think what would happen if we were faced with a major problem. If the remaining rooms go into decay, it will have a terrible effect on Craig-y-nos. This is a magnificent building and our dream is to make it a centre to rival Glyndebourne."

A share scheme is being planned to attract funds from opera and music lovers.



Extravagant talent: Verdi said Patti had no equal

Woman in baby con is sentenced

A woman aged 60 who tricked her lover out of £3,500 by pretending she had given birth to his son was given a suspended prison sentence yesterday.

Margaret Judges, who used a friend's baby girl to fool Philip Phillips, a maths lecturer aged 46, for four years, was sentenced to 18 months in jail, suspended for two years at Chelmsford Crown Court.

Judges, a taxi firm controller, of Maldon, Essex, had denied obtaining money by deception between 1987 and 1991. She told Mr Phillips that the baby was a boy and would be named after him.

Racing libel

Satellite Information Services, a racing information organisation, accepted "substantial" libel damages in the High Court over a Channel 4 programme, *Against the Odds*, which claimed it was involved in a conspiracy with bookmakers to manipulate starting prices.

Fire deaths

A year-old baby boy died in a house fire in Highbury, north London. The parents of Justin Bennett and their two other children managed to escape. In Islington, also north London, police were treating a flat fire in which a middle-aged man died as suspicious.

Police enquiry

The chief constable of Nottingham has ordered an enquiry after three police officers were seen in a nightclub dressed as Ku Klux Klan members. The men are alleged to have visited the club after attending a fancy dress party.

Body named

A mummified body, found a week ago in a hotel cellar, was named at a Nottingham inquest as Linda Killeen, a mother-of-two. She went missing from her lodgings in the city three years ago.

Spanish main

The Spanish spent £2.3 million this year on tourism advertising in the UK, more than any other country. The second highest spender was Australia.

The way it isn't



FURTHER news from my dear old American friends, Al and Sally du Lally. In this final extract from their Christmas round-robin, they tell of their own good fortune over the past year.

"Hi y'all! It's been another super year in our marriage — 32 years now, would you believe, and it don't seem a day! To celebrate our anniversary at the beginning of the year, I gave Al six weeks at a macrobiotic health farm and he gave me two months at Betty Ford's lovely mansion, with 24-hour supervision and free medication up to the first ten gallons.

"We both came back beautifully refreshed, and all set for a swell year! Al brought back his Personal Fitness Trainer, a lovely young-at-heart lady named Cindy with beautiful dyed hair, a great selection of eyelashes and a pretty mauve swimsuit that goes so beautifully with her varicose veins.

"She says she aims to knock pounds a week off Al (how much would that be in dollars, I wonder?) and guarantees that I'll hardly be able to see him when she's finished with him!

"As luck would have it, at Betty Ford's mansion I met a lovely new friend called Larry. Larry swears by the place. He loves it so much he's been back eight times in two years. Ten months on, Larry and Cindy have become old family friends, and they now have adjoining rooms in our lovely home, often staying up all night duetting on old Grateful Dead numbers, would you believe!

"Meanwhile, Al and I have been getting along better than ever, and I know he'd wish me to pass on his season's greetings from his beautiful new one-room condominium in Alaska... Cheers, y'all!"

Charity for homeless offers shelter in the provinces

By NICHOLAS WATT

THOUSANDS of homeless people throughout Britain will swap their damp makeshift beds today for the comfort of a Christmas refuge where they will be fed, given medical treatment where necessary and entertained.

But the respite will be brief and by next Wednesday the rough sleepers, who range from 16-year-olds to pensioners, will return to their itinerant lives.

A disused warehouse in London, which has been taken over by Crisis, the charity for the homeless, opens in London today to shelter up to 2,000 over the holiday. For the first time this year, Crisis will also be opening centres in five regional towns to help the growing number of homeless outside London, who now account for 60 per cent of Britain's total.

Adam Woolf, director of Crisis, said yesterday: "The government has ignored the plight of the regional homeless. We have found that every month 7,500 people are being turned away from shelters outside London. The government has responded so badly to this problem because people sleeping rough in mundane towns is not the same as people bedding down in a smart part of London."

Bristol has the largest concentration of single homeless people outside London, with as many as 800 people sleeping rough every night. Maggie Whittle, of the city's Caring at Christmas charity,

said yesterday that she was particularly worried by the large numbers of youngsters on the streets. "The government says that children under 18 should be protected. But from our experience in Bristol, this is just not the case," Ms Whittle said.

Anne Marie, a single woman of 19 who has been homeless since she lost a council flat two years ago, spends a couple of nights a week at the city's shelter. She is typical of Bristol's young homeless. "I lived in care from the age of 13 until I was 17, when I got a council flat," she said. "But that didn't work out because I didn't have enough support. I've been on a waiting list for another flat for five months but nothing has come of that."

Despite the shelter and food offered by the charity over Christmas, Anne Marie said it would do little to cheer her up. "Coming to the shelter at Christmas puts down your spirits. You'd much rather be with your family or in a place of your own."

Sir George Young, the housing minister, defended the government's support for the single homeless, saying that young people had not been neglected. "If young people cannot get on a training scheme they are still entitled to claim income support. In London, the young homeless have been helped first."

In an interview with *The Times*, Sir George said he

would not change his policy of concentrating resources on London's homeless, leaving local authorities to cope in the regions. Over the past three years, the government has provided £96 million for London. Last year, £6.1 million was provided for regional voluntary organisations.

"I don't want local authorities to feel that if they do nothing the government will ride to their rescue. In the 1991 census there were 2,700 people sleeping rough in the country, with 1,300 in London and 1,400 in the regions. We decided to focus on London because the problem was so acute."

"Although the regional figures are comparable with London, they are distributed across a far wider number of authorities. The problem in London is deeply rooted and people have been sleeping rough in Lincoln's Inn Fields since 1810."

But John Battle, Labour's housing spokesman, said yesterday that the government had to focus on the regions. "I have been shocked by the number of homeless people outside London. Young homeless people who would have headed to London two years ago are now staying in their home towns because their realisation there is no hope in the capital." York, for example, had a 70 per cent increase in homeless this year.

The government should change the law to make local authorities legally responsible for housing the single homeless, Mr Battle said. "There is a terrible shortage of affordable cheap housing and we would call on the government to provide 'supportive' housing," he said.

But Sir George said that this year's Autumn Statement announced that the government would buy up to 20,000 homes to provide cheap housing. "I am not persuaded to change the law [on the single homeless] because local authorities must first provide housing for the elderly, the disabled and young families."

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John Hargood, page 12
Diary, page 12



Rural homeless: a jobseeker on the street in Suffolk

RAISED IN THE HIGHLANDS



Churches say Serbs are using rape as a weapon

By ROGER BOYES, EAST EUROPE CORRESPONDENT

RAPE has become a systematic weapon of war in the Bosnian conflict and the rapists should be put before war crimes tribunals, according to a report by the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Women investigators from the WCC have just returned from two Croat refugee camps and have compared their evidence with that gathered by other groups, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

"We are now convinced that there is a policy of systematic rape — and that it is a weapon of war, not just a by-product," Brenda Fitzpatrick of the WCC said yesterday. Ms Fitzpatrick, a member of the

Once they were visibly pregnant they were left alone until the seventh month of pregnancy, when abortion would be impossible. "The Serbs have the clear aim," said Ms Fitzpatrick, quoting an interviewee, "of creating a generation of children of hate."

Both the WCC and the World Council of Churches agree that many thousands of women are involved. Among the raped refugees there was strong anger. Ms Fitzpatrick said, not only about the assault but about the "international voyeurism" which has sensationalised the problem. Few organisations have offered psychiatric assistance to the women, testimony is only being gathered very sketchily and many victims believe that the rapes are not being treated seriously when they are reported to the authorities.

One priority is to collect evidence before it is covered up. Publicity is often self-defeating, since as soon as the site of a rape camp is mentioned frequently in the press, it is moved. The International Red Cross has arrived at reported camps to find nothing but recently vacated barracks.

Chroniding atrocities has always been difficult in Bosnia, since the propaganda war is in full flush. Some refugees have tried to enhance their chances of finding asylum by exaggerating incidents. The rapes are, however, among verifiable war crimes because pregnancy cannot be simulated and few women have a motive for making up such a story.

HUMAN RIGHTS

investigation team, acknowledged that rapes were being committed by all sides but said only the Serbs had made it a policy to rape and impregnate captive Muslim women.

Other international bodies, including the parliamentary assembly of the Western European Union (WEU), had been collecting credible reports of large-scale rape. The WEU report stated: "Women and girls are held in rape camps where each day they are humiliated and tortured repeatedly and... are even often killed."

The WEU also found evidence that male prisoners of war were being castrated.

The "rape camps" appear to be a sinister offshoot of ethnic cleansing. Many victims say they were told that they would be raped repeatedly until they became pregnant and could bear ethnic Serbian children.

Major visit, page 1
Simon Jenkins, page 12
Letters, page 13



The hotel where no one wanted to stay

Bosnia's war mirrors the horrors of the Nazi's 'joy division', writes Adam LeBar

SERB fighters came to Azra's flat in Visegrad in early June. She remembers the date clearly. She was raped and her sister Munira, 16, and their schoolfriend, 18, disappeared.

"The Serbs were wearing camouflage uniforms with grey berets and a white cockade. They arrived at 11.30am and said we had to go to the police station to identify some classmates," said Azra, 17, now a refugee in Zenica, Bosnia.

The police station was just a few yards away but the destination was the hotel Vilina Vlas, a place of dread where Serbs took away local girls. Munira and the sisters' friend were sent off with two soldiers and Azra was left alone in a room at the hotel. Her interrogation began five minutes later.

"He locked the door and pushed the table in front," said Azra. "He asked me who had weapons among the Muslims. I said I didn't know because they had all been handed in. He said I was lying and he asked me who my father was."

"Then he started to take off his clothes and ordered me to strip as well... and then later... I did not want to strip," said Azra, crying as she told her story. "But I took them off. I wouldn't give myself though and I defended myself so he wanted to beat me. He told me, 'It's your honour to be mine. You could have been thrown into the river Drina or a quarry.' I started to scream. Then he stood up and said he would get ten other guys to tear me apart so I could not hold out any longer and I gave up."

At about 3pm, Azra said, she heard a long scream. "A bit later a door was unlocked and I heard a soldier cursing. A girl was crying in the hallway and it was my sister. The two have not seen each other since. Yet compared with many, Azra had a lucky escape. Her assailant allowed her home the next day and she left Visegrad in July without her sister but with the rest of her family."

Azra wanted the world to know what was happening in Bosnia but she was too frightened to give her real name or that of her sister, as she fears for her safety if she is still alive.

Bosnian and Croatian human rights groups list more than a dozen sites which they describe as "brothel camps" where women of all ages have been held and repeatedly gang-raped by Serb fighters.

In survivors' testimonies the name of the Vilina Vlas appears again and again.

In the second world war, the Nazis had their "joy division" of women female concentration camp inmates and the Japanese ran "comfort camps" where Korean women were raped. Now the Bosnian war appears to have its own versions.

Rapes have been committed by Muslim, Croat and

Serb fighters during the conflict, say human rights activists. But the Serbs are charged with setting up a network of sites where women are imprisoned and suffer repeated multiple rapes. Survivors also claim that once the soldiers have finished with their female captives many of the women are killed. The revelations add to the list of atrocities in a war that daily plunges

new depths of degradation. Many rape survivors are now pregnant and it is only as their condition becomes more obvious that they begin to talk about their experiences.

Sylvana Foa, a spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva, said: "We have credible and consistent reports of widespread and systematic rape." There were

many victims with "stories of rape and sexual abuse that independently bear each other out", she said.

Neither the Red Cross nor the UN has access to sites such as the Hotel Vilina Vlas. Relief workers fear that any women still being held there could be killed and the evidence destroyed should they demand access. Already the UN has recorded a sinister imbalance in the ages of the refugees who manage to leave Bosnia. "There is a lack of women of reproductive age, just as there is men of draft age, especially among refugees who left after their towns were occupied by the Serbs," said Ms Foa.

Borislav Herak, a Serb, 21, being held in a Sarajevo prison on war crimes charges, has given a detailed account of how Serb fighters raped young Bosnian women at a prison turned brothel camp. "I raped the girls in the motel then took them to the Zuc hill [north of Sarajevo], shot them and hid their bodies," he said. "I raped ten girls in their 20s and killed six of them." He said he was forced to rape the women, under orders from his superiors. Several female survivors of the brothel camps have testified that Serb fighters, some of whom had been known to them as friends and neighbours, were forced by their commanders to rape them.

Many Bosnians believe the organised mass rapes, allegedly sometimes by Serbs brought in from outside, serve a darker purpose: to prevent local Serbs and Muslims from ever being able to live together again. Dr Milhamet Sestic, a psychiatrist in Zenica, said: "These Serbs are destroying the culture, the tradition and the houses of the Muslims. And [by these rapes] they destroy relations between neighbours."

Amsterdam: Photographs revealing atrocities caused by nationalism past and present went on show on yesterday in the house where Anne Frank hid from occupying Nazi forces during the second world war.

The Anne Frank Foundation decided to put on the exhibition after the atrocities of the war in the Balkans were reported. "We decided in the first half of this year, especially after all the stories about concentration camps in Yugoslavia... that this must be our topic for a new exhibition," an organiser, Jaap Tanga said.

Images of refugees in the former Yugoslavia mirror those of people in 1944 fleeing the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. Pictures illustrating spreading nationalism in Germany, Belgium, Ireland, Hungary, Romania and France stand side by side. (Reuters)

Additional reporting by Alexandra Stiglmayer

Defiant Panic urges world to snub Milosevic

FROM TIM JUDAH AND DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

MILAN Panic, the Yugoslav prime minister, yesterday demanded the total international isolation of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian president, and called on him to resign. Mr Panic denied that he had been thrashed by Mr Milosevic in Sunday's Serbian elections, adding: "The Serbian people did not elect Milosevic... he cheated, he should get out now."

The prime minister was speaking as Vuk Draskovic, a leader of Depos, Serbia's opposition coalition, claimed that the election had been "rigged to the last detail". He said that, as far as Depos was concerned, Mr Panic was now the elected president of Serbia.

Mr Panic, a Serb-American businessman, vowing to continue fighting, said he had no intention of returning to his former home in California. He added that he hoped to be able to weld together and lead

a united opposition to carry on the struggle against Mr Milosevic "within the system". He predicted that opposition supporters would come into the streets to protest over the alleged election fraud but said: "I am not calling for an uprising. I am against unrest... I do not want to start a civil war."

The latest results show that Mr Milosevic was leading Mr Panic by 56 per cent to 35 per cent, but Mr Panic has asked the electoral commission to declare the results void and to call a new election. International election observers tend to agree that Sunday's poll was, in the words of one of them, "seriously flawed".

In an interview with *The Times*, Mr Panic said the official election results were

"propaganda" and produced opposition figures showing that Mr Milosevic had won 49 per cent of the vote to his own 43 per cent — a result that, if it had been officially declared, would have required a run-off poll. The prime minister said he had been handicapped from the start because of Mr Milosevic's control of Serbian television, but he also blamed Western countries for his defeat. He accused Western politicians of not honouring their promises to him to send computers for the elections and vital television broadcasting equipment.

Mr Panic said he would now call for the total international isolation of the Serbian president, but stopped short of endorsing the call made by John Major and others for the closing of Serbia's frontiers and the cutting of postal and telecommunications links. "I don't know who that would



Panic demanding that poll be declared void

help," he said. "The West should ignore Milosevic. No one should talk to him. No one should bring him messages. He should be totally isolated."

Mr Panic said he would like President Cosic of Yugoslavia to ask him to serve a second term as prime minister, add-

ing that he expected Mr Cosic to honour his pledge to resign if, as now seemed likely, the federal parliament were controlled by Mr Milosevic's Socialist party in alliance with the extreme nationalists of the Serbian Radical party.

In Serbia's southern province of Kosovo yesterday, Zejko Raznjajovic, a militia leader better known as Arkan, his nom de guerre, celebrated his election to the Serbian parliament. Arkan's men have been accused by the American State Department and human rights groups of committing numerous atrocities and mass executions in Croatia and Bosnia. More than 90 per cent of Kosovo's population is ethnic Albanian but, heading calls by his leaders, they boycotted the elections on Sunday.

Arkan said yesterday that he intended to make sure that "Kosovo will no longer be a problem for Yugoslavia". He said that he wanted to see Vojislav Seselj, the Radical party leader, made minister of defence or put in charge of the police. Mr Seselj has called for the mass deportation of ethnic Albanians and other non-Serbs from Serbia.

Bonn: Klaus Kinkel, the German foreign minister, said yesterday that he would regret a victory by Mr Milosevic. "If that is to be, we will naturally be sorry further important means have been lost with which we had hoped to influence the events there," Herr Kinkel told German radio.

He stopped short of calling for the political isolation of Serbia, which the outside world accuses of being responsible for the war in Bosnia. It was an option, he said, but it would not be easy "as the consequences will have to be carried by the people... which on one side we are trying to avoid and on another is unavoidable." (Reuters)



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DISASTER RELIEF WITHIN DEAN

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■ An unusually silent Yeltsin has taken a break in the country, leaving behind him increasing worries about the fate of reform

PRESIDENT Yeltsin abruptly left the Kremlin for his country residence yesterday, delaying the announcement of the new Russian cabinet. He also cancelled the Commonwealth of Independent States summit scheduled for Christmas Day, pleading a "mild cold." Observers believe, however, that he simply has too much else on his plate.

Mr Yeltsin's spokesman said he had retreated "to study documents" and intended to hold talks with Anatoli Chubais, his privatisation chief, and Aleksandr Shokhin, the deputy prime minister, who are both considered prime movers in the reformist cause. Only then would he have talks with Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister, about the final shape of the new government.

Another young minister, Pyotr Aven, who was responsible for foreign trade and was Russia's chief negotiator in debt talks with the West, resigned yesterday afternoon. With the Russian cabinet in a state of more than usual chaos, it was unclear whether he had decided that the policy draft Mr Chernomyrdin has indicated in several statements was incompatible with a rapid transition to the free market and left on a point of principle or whether he had learnt that Mr Yeltsin planned to sacrifice him and resigned before he was ousted.


The air of unpredictability hanging over Moscow is intensified by the unusual silence from Mr Yeltsin who, since arriving back early from China, has remained publicly inactive as the disorder grows around him. The uncertainty about Russia's next moves, as much as the removal of Mr Aven, is likely to further unsettle Western creditors.

While the new prime minister emphasised yesterday that there were "no acute differences" with Mr Yehsin on the composition of a new government, rumours of more cabinet changes persisted, with Mr Shokhin reported by the Interfax news agency to be unsure of remaining. Ella Pamiłowa, responsible for social security and the only woman in the cabinet, resigned on Monday.

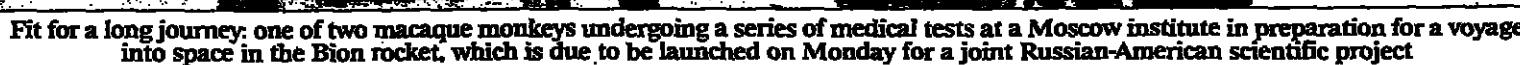
Parliament yesterday refused Mr Yeltsin's request that an article be inserted in the constitution stating that he holds the chief executive power in Russia. It did, however, concede him the right to dismiss his prime minister — a significant advantage in any future power battle with Mr Chernomyrdin.

general shift away from monetary control seems to have made some ministers reconsider. Mr Yeltsin has denied that the government intends to risk an inflationary spiral by pumping state funds into industry, but wide differences remain with Mr Chernomyrdin on economic strategy.

On Rival's advice, Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet president, yesterday advised Mr Yeltsin, his rival when he was in office, to draw support from the forces of the centre in parliament instead of relying on radical reformers. Mr Gorbachev told the daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* that, during the recent session of the Congress of People's Deputies, "there emerged a clear centrist force". (AFP)



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FROM BRUCE CLARK IN BAKU

While Georgians long sulkily for the *dolce vita* of years past, and blockaded Armenia teeters on the edge of starvation, their Muslim neighbours in Azerbaijan, whom they used to despise as poor relations, are sitting more or less comfortably.

The streets of crime-ridden Tbilisi and energy-starved Yerevan are deserted after dark, while in Baku the acrid, blustery night air is still rent by an impressive cacophony of badly tuned car engines.

True, the tapwater in the world's oldest oil city is still brownish-black, and it can take all morning to telephone a neighbouring suburb. Moreover, a wretched, brutalising war with the Armenians — whose 3,000 victims must include at least 1,000 women and children — has taken its toll, economically and psychologically. There are fears of a "war of cities" in which the two sides exchange Scud missiles.

But there is still an unmistakable sense in Baku that an important, prosperous and unpredictable new power is emerging in Transcaucasia and the Middle East.

It shares a language with Turkey, a religion — Shia Islam — with Iran, an administrative and educational system with Russia, and some vital commercial interests with the corporations of the West. It has enjoyed remarkably cordial contacts with Israel, while ties with Iran have been strained by the lobbying of some nationalist Azerbaijanis on behalf of the millions of Azerbaijani speakers who are also Iranian citizens.

Now, as 100 years ago, when the Rothschilds and the Nobels turned Baku into a boom town, the key to Azerbaijan's rising prosperity lies in the black liquid which oozes out of the ground along the banks of the Caspian Sea.

While the Soviet break-up left most republics with weak, lopsided economies,

Azerbaijan found itself sitting on a small Eldorado in the form of at least 350 million tonnes of petroleum deposits deep beneath the sea. This is too deep for local technology to exploit: but annual oil output is expected to double over the next five years, to at least 25 million tonnes, as corporations such as BP and Amoco get to work.

This is one reason for the firmness with which Azerbaijan — despite steadily increasing cultural, political and economic ties with Ankara — rejects the idea of incorporation into a greater Turkey. "We have got rid of one elder brother — the Soviet Union," says Nadjaf Nadjafov, a journalist and spokesman for President Elchibey. "We now have a deep conviction that we don't need any more elder brothers."

In a claim that demands a leap of the imagination, as one contemplates the rundown and ecologically blighted city, Mr Nadijafov envisages Azerbaijan becoming a kind of Switzerland of the Near East.

To a Westerner, Azerbaijan feels a bit like an Arab country in the 1950s or 1960s after the overthrow of a tame, semi-colonial regime: a prickly young state is beginning to flex its economic, cultural and military muscles but is unsure which way to leap.

There are pockets of support for militant Islam; slightly larger ones for the idea of some Turkic political entity stretching from China to Bulgaria. But these could founder on the same rocks of personal ambitions and conflicting interests as the grandiose plans for Arab unity.

The trumpet city on the Caspian, home in Leonid Brezhnev's day to the hottest discotheques and the shortest miniskirts in the Soviet Union, is keeping its admirers guessing.

□ Moscow: Azerbaijan's parliament adopted a law approving Turkish as the official language. (AFP)

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Israeli court rejects pleas to let trapped deportees return

Israel dispatched more troops to the Lebanon border area, fearing a new attempt by Palestinians to re-enter Israeli-held territory

FROM BEN LYNFIELD IN JERUSALEM AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN BEIRUT

ISRAEL'S supreme court yesterday rejected appeals to allow back the 415 Palestinians expelled last week. Troop reinforcements were rushed to the border area with Lebanon to prevent a second attempt by the deportees to return to Israeli-held territory from no man's land.

Chief Justice Meir Shamgar said the deportees were now in territory under Lebanese jurisdiction, in an apparent endorsement of the argument by Israel's state attorney that Israel was no longer responsible for them. The unanimous decision came at the end of the third day of the court's consideration of petitions from the deportees' lawyers. Avidor Feldman and Emdad Dakwar, to bring them back or otherwise assure their well-being on the grounds that they had not been accepted into Lebanon and that Israel was therefore still responsible for them under international law.

Lieutenant General Ehud Barak, the Israeli army chief of staff, making his second court appearance in defence of the expulsions, disputed the claim that the lives of the deportees, said to be leaders and activists of the Hamas Islamic Resistance Movement and the Islamic Jihad group, were endangered in the "uncertain" conditions of Lebanon. "In my opinion, there is no danger to the life or safety of the deportees as long as they do nothing unreasonable," General Barak said. But he added that "warning shots will be fired again" if they tried to move to the security zone.

Earlier, the deportees trudged back to their tents after coming under heavy machinegun and mortar fire closer to the heavily mined border crossing into the Israeli



buffer zone. A spokesman for the deportees said that different types of protest action were being planned in the camp but would give no details. The Palestinians are aware of the strong media interest in their plight and determined to maintain it.

Observers said that two more deportees were injured in the overnight shelling, one man seriously, but he was not found until a morning count had prompted a search. A total of five have been wounded since Israeli-backed Lebanese militiamen used live ammunition to repel the efforts of the exiles, chanting Islamic slogans, to return southwards.

The stand-off, inconveniently for Israel taking place in the full glare of world publicity, grew more critical as Lebanon moved to block all attempts by outside agencies, including the Red Cross, to provide relief to the Palestinians passing their sixth night in uncomfortable limbo.

The refusal to allow in aid was ordered by Rafik Hariri, the prime minister, to back up his assertion that the fate of the Palestinians is entirely Israel's responsibility. A spokesman for the exiles, 30 of whom were reported to be suffering from severe diarrhoea, said that the camp's supply of clean

drinking water was almost exhausted and that food and medical supplies were running low.

As if to underline the harm being caused to Israel's international image by the impasse, only journalists and cameramen were being allowed past the last Lebanese army checkpoint before the tents while United Nations relief trucks and ambulances were held back.

The ugly camp, erected amid barren hills, began to take on a more permanent look during the day as some of the Palestinians started to dig latrines and others acquired pieces of corrugated-iron sheeting to provide protection against the bad weather conditions.

The tough stand taken by the Lebanese government has boosted the standing of Mr Hariri, a billionaire businessman whose appointment in October has given the country a new confidence after years of civil war. "It is not our responsibility. It is just not normal. Lebanon is not a dumping ground," stated Mr Hariri, who has close contacts with both the Syrian and Saudi governments.

There is quiet satisfaction in Lebanon at the extreme embarrassment that the incident is causing Israel abroad. For this reason co-operation is being given to Western reporters, media, who, until recently, would have faced the possibility of being kidnapped in Lebanon. Beirut's shell-scattered international airport is now crowded with drivers holding up signboards to greet the new arrivals from press and television.

Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee, that he personally authorised the firing of shells over the heads of the deportees. "To the best of my knowledge not one person was hurt. Everything was a show. The proof is that no one was shown in hospital," an official quoted Mr Rabin as saying during the closed session. Mr Rabin also attacked the Association for Citizens' Rights in Israel for filing the injunction that forced supreme court scrutiny of the deportations. Leaders of the left-wing Meretz party, Mr Rabin's coalition allies, urged him to follow up the deportations with overtures to the Palestine Liberation Organisation, saying failure to do so would be "a half-done job".

In the Gaza Strip, the army lifted a weeklong closure in selected areas, allowing at least 2,200 Palestinians to cross into Israel for work. But most of the area's 700,000 residents remained confined to their homes by army order. In the West Bank, Palestinians shut their shops for the fifth consecutive day in a commercial strike to protest the deportations.

Arab citizens of Israel held a one-day strike to show solidarity, closing schools and shops in villages throughout northern Israel.

Letters, page 13

Stranglehold on Kabul tightens

FROM ANDREW FINKEL IN KABUL

The barbarian at the gate is an 18-year-old who appears to want nothing more than the chance to practise his English. He mans the checkpoint at the eastern entrance to Kabul and is, residents of the Afghan capital believe, inflicting hardship by restricting what supplies reach it.

The Soviet-built flats not far from his post may never have been suitable for Kabul's extremes of climate, but fuel for the winter now costs four times an annual wage. Apartment dwellers go to wells for water and huddle over campfires to cook. Many have sent their families away, in contrast to previous years when people came to Kabul for safety.

After years of civil war, the capital is controlled from the countryside. Administration consists of laying sandbags and digging gun emplacements. As rival factions jostle for power, they are stranglehold Kabul.

Few in the city hold any hope that, by summoning the Shura Ha-e-Aqd, the interim president, Burhanuddin Rabbani, will bring about a political solution. The shura is a representative assembly that Mr Rabbani hopes will reselect him as president and pave the way for a new constitution. However, most of his rivals have rejected this.

The fighting that erupted a fortnight ago is the price of disunity. Shia Hazaras who dominate one part of Kabul fought ethnic Tajik troops loyal to Ahmad Shah Masoud, the defence minister. This prompted a third force, an Uzbek militia loyal to General Abdul Rashid Dostam, to occupy key points in the city.

Any long-term solution will need the approval of General Dostam, whose defection from the Najibullah regime last April helped bring it down. A solution will also require the consent of the fundamentalist Pushtun nationalist party, Hezb-i-Islami. This is led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who controls much of the vital supply route to Pakistan.

Aid agencies involved in reconstruction pass through up to 40 checkpoints be-



between Kabul and Jalalabad. Some are manned by nothing more threatening than stuffed dummies, but others mean business. Even the United Nations has had lorries of grain and vehicles seized.

Exact tolls is a time-honoured practice in Afghanistan, but few doubt that Mr Hekmatyar, who launched a bloody but unsuccessful attack on Kabul in August, is trying to foment discontent. Hezb-i-Islami can also control the power supply to Kabul from dams to the east.

Many believe more bloodshed could be avoided if the nine Mujahidin leaders and General Dostam agreed on a president among themselves. The most likely candidates would be figures without strong military support. Syed Ahmed Gailani, who has royalist leanings, is in the running, as is Younis Khalis, who enjoys hardline Islamic support.

It is a confusing prospect for Kabul residents, who long for nothing more than peace and a few hours of electricity. There was a rare glimpse of what political co-operation might bring when a World Food Programme convoy negotiated its way into Kabul at the beginning of the week and was waved through by the young Hezb-i-Islami guard at the final checkpoint. No sooner had the convoy arrived, however, than fighting broke out again. A rocket landed in the bazaar killing ten people, including two children.

Highway clash: Fighting flared on the road east from Kabul to Pakistan as Hezb-i-Islami fighters attacked defence ministry forces a mile from the capital. (AFP)



Power politics: Bill Clinton listens as Hazel O'Leary, his newly appointed energy secretary, addresses the press in Little Rock, Arkansas. Richard Riley, the governor of South Carolina, was appointed education secretary

Allies take comfort after Clinton signals cautious foreign policy

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN WASHINGTON

BILL Clinton, the US president-elect, was expected yesterday to name Warren Christopher, a former aide in Jimmy Carter's administration, as his Secretary of State, and Les Aspin, a Democrat congressman and a known hawk in foreign affairs, as defence secretary.

The appointments are likely to go some way in reassuring Western allies that the untested Mr Clinton is likely to be cautious and moderate in his foreign policy. The expected appointment of Anthony Lake, a noted scholar of international relations, as national security adviser will also cause few worries in European capitals.

Mr Christopher is an experienced foreign policy professional. He is a conservative and establishment figure. Mr Aspin is well known to foreign governments, having served for many years as chairman of the House of Representatives' armed services committee. He supported Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf war and is unlikely to have much time for dovish Carter-type notions. Mr Lake is also not a rock-the-boat figure, despite resigning as an aide to Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon's Secretary of State, when the United States went into Cambodia. Mr Lake ran the policy planning section in the State Department during the Carter administration and is a respected scholar of international relations.

The selection of the team had been anxiously awaited by

diplomats in Washington, who have been struggling to predict Mr Clinton's foreign policy. Throughout the presidential election campaign Mr Clinton said that if elected he would be the "domestic president", concentrating on America's economic and social ills. He would not be like President Bush and place a higher priority on being a "world leader". Signalling how domestic issues were upmost in his mind, Mr Clinton's first cabinet appointments consisted of economic jobs.

Only in the past three weeks, as the Balkan conflict worsened and Western fears grew for the reform process in Moscow, has the Clinton camp fully realised that international problems will beset the new president. Six days ago Mr Clinton acknowledged in a speech that "only the United States can play the leadership role".

His outline of foreign policy objectives mixed Bush-like ambitions with Carter-like hopes. He said he wanted to remake America's foreign policy for the post-Cold war era, reshape the country's armed forces, boost the nation's competitiveness, promote free markets and democracy throughout the world and "to stick up for the alleviation of human suffering".

Mr Clinton's aides say that he will take an active role in deciding the administration's foreign policy and the extent and limits of what the United

States can do on the world stage. "From what we know of his record, he's not very good at being a hands-off executive," said Stephen Hess, of the Brookings Institution.

Mr Clinton's foreign policy brief is as wide as any American president has had to face. "Essentially we have to erect a whole new conceptual basis for foreign policy after the Cold war," said Will Marshall, the president of the Progressive Policy Institute. Mr Clinton's favourite think-tank. "There is now a vacuum. The old rationale no longer works and the new one isn't clear." According to Theodore Sorensen, who served as special counsel to John Kennedy, the president-elect will be "standing at a crossroads, looking at conflicting signposts and holding outdared maps".



Aspin: hawkish figure who is known abroad

Some Democrats who wanted to see a more creative foreign policy team will no doubt criticise Mr Clinton's selections. Whether this team can be smooth-running as Mr Bush's remains to be seen. James Baker, Richard Cheney and Brent Scowcroft had worked together since the mid-1970s.

Even with this conservative team, the question remains whether Mr Clinton will be sure-footed. His statements in the autumn on reversing the Bush administration's ban on Haitian refugees alarmed State Department officials, who argue that it could trigger another wave of boat people seeking a secure life in the United States. In the case of the Balkan war, the intervention in Somalia, Russia's struggle to reform and Iraq, the president-elect will have to show better instincts.

"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things," Nicolo Machiavelli advised his prince. As the old world gives way to the new, Mr Clinton stands at an international crossroads, every bit as confusing as the junction Warren Harding faced in 1920 and Harry Truman confronted in 1948. Harding chose isolationism and may have contributed by his inaction to the rise of European fascism. Truman opted to become the architect of the Cold war order.

Paper boy injured in wave of violence

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

AN eight-year-old boy on his morning paper round yesterday became the latest white casualty of the indiscriminate violence that has reduced South Africa to a state of nervous terror.

Timus Swart was delivering papers in Randburg, a dormitory town on the outskirts of Johannesburg, when gunmen in a car opened fire on a minibus carrying black commuters to work. Timus was wounded in the legs by the bullets, but should be out of hospital by Christmas.

Captain Eugene Opperman, the police spokesman for the Johannesburg area, said two other people were wounded but declined to identify them. The gunmen's car, spotted later at a nearby shopping centre, was chased through a white suburb. Three men were being held but a fourth, armed with an AK47 automatic rifle, escaped.

The killing of a white girl, aged 14, at the weekend on an farm near Ficksburg in Orange Free State, close to the

border of independent Lesotho, and of an elderly white farmer on Monday night at Theunissen, northeast of Bloemfontein, the province's capital, has created an atmosphere of panic and distrust. In Johannesburg, there is an uneasy awareness among the Christmas shopping crowds that borders on panic.

Yesterday the government proclaimed 23 magisterial districts in the eastern Orange Free State and the eastern Cape Province as "unrest areas", which gives the police extra power of arrest and detention. In Transvaal, commando units of the army have been put on alert in case the violence spreads.

Predictably the ultra-right wing got into the act and Eugene Terre Blanche, leader of the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement, said yesterday that the movement would do all in its power to prevent attacks on whites. He called on the government to provide subsidised electrified fences around farms.

State bank denies aiding Moi

FROM REUTERS IN NAIROBI

KENYA'S central bank poured scorn yesterday on opposition charges that it was printing money to finance President Moi's campaign to retain power in next week's elections.

The bank took the unusual step of issuing a long statement denying charges that it had ordered the equivalent of £125 million in local currency to finance the election campaign of the ruling Kenya African National Union.

The charges were the latest by key opposition figures claiming that President Moi and his supporters are fighting a dirty campaign to cling to power. The opposition says the government is handing out money to buy the loyalty of its supporters and to bribe its candidates to withdraw from the poll.

US-led troops press inland to reach Somalia famine towns

FROM PAUL HOLMES IN MOGADISHU

A THOUSAND US Marines and French troops headed for the Somali interior yesterday in a Christmas push which will extend Operation Restore Hope to Baidoa and three other famine-hit towns.

As columns of vehicles snaked out of Mogadishu at dawn, Washington was again under pressure from the United Nations secretary-general to disarm Somalia's feuding warlords and gun-toting gangs of looters. Boutros Boutros Ghali said in a long report that the American-led task force should stay in Somalia until security was established and spread their mission to the whole country.

"It would be a tragedy if the premature departure or remodelling of the unified task force were to plunge Somalia back into anarchy and starvation," Dr Boutros Ghali said. Ali Mahdi Muhammad, the main warlord in north Mogadishu, was to move his "technicals" — the locals' name for trucks armed with machineguns and rocket

launchers — out of the capital yesterday under a deal with his rival, General Muhammad Farrah Aidid, who withdrew his technicals on Monday. The deal implements part of a seven-point peace accord the two men agreed on December 11, two days after the start of the multinational armed mission to keep food for famine victims safe from pillaging gunmen. The accord was brokered by America, but Washington said the task of disarming a country awash with weapons should fall to UN peacekeepers who will eventually replace the 38,000 American and foreign troops involved in Operation Restore Hope.

Gunmen and their technicals have mostly faded into the bush ahead of the landing of task force troops at Mogadishu. Baidoa and the southern port of Kismayu since December 9. American and French forces have fired on technicals that venture into areas they control, perceiving them as hostile. At

least four Somalis have been killed and up to 14 injured.

Signs emerged yesterday, however, that the gunmen were growing bolder as the 700 US Marines and 300 French troops left Mogadishu airport in several convoys for the 150-mile journey northwest to Baidoa, Somalia's "city of death". Colonel Buck Bedard told his marines to keep their weapons well on show on the road to Baidoa, where the number of Somalis brandishing guns had increased in recent days. "I don't know what the hell is causing this hostility, but you better be aware of it. This is no time to crash back and sleep," he said.

The marines will fan out quickly from Baidoa over muddy and flooded roads for Baidoa, 75 miles southwest, and three towns to the north. An American source said the plan was to enter Baidoa on Christmas Eve, Haddur on Christmas Day, in a French-led operation, and Jajalaki and Belet by early next week. (Reuters)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sihanouk appeals for halt to shelling

Phnom Penh: Khmer Rouge guerrillas have unleashed heavy artillery barrages in northwest Cambodia to test the resolve of United Nations peacekeepers, senior Phnom Penh officials said. Fighting around the town of Phum Bavel also threatens the provincial capital, Battambang.

In the past week shelling by Khmer Rouge and government forces across the Mongkol Borei river at Bavel, 25 miles northwest of Battambang, has sent at least 10,000 civilians fleeing from their homes. Many had just been repatriated from refugee camps in Thailand.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Cambodian leader, and Yasushi Akashi, head of the United Nations peacekeeping mission, have condemned the violence and appealed for a halt to the shelling.

The Khmer Rouge have refused to disarm or allow voters to register in their zones for elections scheduled for May. In the past month they have directly challenged the UN by kidnapping groups of peacekeeping troops on four occasions. (Reuters)

Fire sweeps city

Ottawa: Fire, driven by strong winds, raced through the heart of St John's, capital of Newfoundland, forcing about 1,000 people from their homes and causing damage estimated at millions of dollars. The cause was not immediately known.

Ramos appeals

Manila: President Ramos appealed to King Fahd to spare two Filipinos said to be facing execution on Christmas Day for preaching Christianity in Saudi Arabia. They have been in prison for two months after allegedly trying to build a church. (AP)

Death duty

Washington: An American public ethics group has said people have "a social duty" to give up their organs upon death. The Communitarian Network proposes mandatory donation of organs for transplants unless the person or a relative objects. (AP)

Nuclear protest

Port-Vila: Vanuatu: Greenpeace has accused Japan of breaking a pledge not to let its plutonium freighter, *Akatsuki Maru*, sail through the territorial waters of Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, which have lodged strong protests against the vessel's passage. (AFP)

Reprisal feared

Delhi: Indian authorities are reinforcing security for the Taj Mahal, fearing an attack on the monument to love, following the destruction of the Moghul-built Ayodhya mosque by Hindu zealots. Visitors will have to be screened by metal detectors. (AFP)

Petrol banned

Seoul: South Korea will ban the sale of leaded petrol from January 1 to help cut pollution, the energy ministry said. Leaded petrol currently accounts for only 14 per cent of total petrol sales here and Seoul suffers acutely from pollution. (Reuters)

Brittan chosen to steer EC through critical world trade talks



Delors shuffled his team for last time

FROM GEORGE BROCK
IN BRUSSELS

JACQUES Delors shuffled his European commissioners for the third and last time yesterday, making Britain's senior commissioner the EC's top trade negotiator as the world trade talks enter a critical phase.

M Delors' new team contains a few stars and sturdy veterans but is weak lower in the batting order. M Delors, who will end his term as president of the Commission at the end of 1994 if he does not leave Brussels sooner to run for the French presidency, has found it hard to attract politically influential commissioners because another reshuffle is scheduled in two years — if the Maastricht treaty comes into force. The Commission proposes and enforces EC law, but its powers in foreign and immigration policy are weak.

The largest change revealed by yesterday's share-out of responsibilities reflects revolutionary changes in the international system of recent years.

Foreign affairs will now be split between Hans van den Broek, the outgoing Dutch foreign minister, and Britain's senior commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan. Mr van den Broek will handle the Commission's political diplomacy and its responsibilities for foreign policymaking under the Maastricht treaty as well as the talks on bringing Austria, Sweden, Finland and Norway into the EC.

Sir Leon emerged from weeks of horse-trading with responsibility for external trade negotiations and the aid programmes for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Sir Leon, who has run competition policy for the last four years, will remain in the limelight, being involved in the talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in Geneva. Suspended for two years while the EC and America inched towards a deal on farm subsidies, the talks are restarting with difficulty and the Commission's negotiators are under attack from a French government bent on unravelling the unity of the EC's stance.

As two strong political personalities dividing newly-demarcated subjects which can overlap, Mr van den Broek and Sir Leon could easily be entangled in the kind of internal row which has damaged the Commission's credibility in the world trade talks. But both men are on the centre-right and will realise that they can only exercise any leverage against M Delors, a socialist, if they stick together. M Delors will be wary of both men. Sir Leon is advocates too liberal economic policies for his liking and Mr van den Broek is a watchful opponent of M Delors's characteristically French wish to tug Europe away from the Atlantic alliance.

M Delors would like to keep a close eye on the diplomatic portfolio, which he is finally relinquishing to a fellow commissioner, by inserting one of his closest aides, Pascal Lamy, as Mr van den Broek's most senior official. M Lamy, a French official with a fear-some reputation as an enforcer of M Delors' edicts, is expected to run in next spring's parliamentary election in France and lose. He will then be

looking for a job back in Brussels. M Delors has rewarded his current favourite, Karel van Miert, a Belgian, with the supervision of competition policy — and has broken the unwritten rule which has barred socialist commissioners from that job. The appointment will stir fears that the political discretion built into EC competition policy will be used as a form of dirigiste industrial policy. But Mr van Miert will have to follow the precedents established by his two effective predecessors, and was indeed a notable promoter of free-market solutions in his job as transport commissioner.

OTTAWA: A dispute between Canada and the EC has been resolved, at least temporarily, with an agreement by the Europeans to curtail their fishing activities off Newfoundland. The EC has pledged to honour quotas set by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation, a 12-country alliance that includes EC members and Canada.

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EC PORTFOLIOS

From January 6 1993

President Jacques Delors service, monetary matters and Spokesman's service. Mr Henning Christophersen Mr Manuel Marin	Secretary General, think-tank legal
Mr Martin Bangemann Sir Leon Brittan Mr Abel Matutes Mr Peter Schmidhuber Mrs Christiane Scrivener	Economic and financial affairs Cooperation and development, humanitarian aid Industrial affairs & intotech External economic affairs and trade Energy and transport Budgets and fraud prevention Customs, taxation and consumer policy
Mr Bruce Millan Mr Karel van Miert Mr Hans van den Broek	Regional policy Competition and personnel External political relations and enlarge- ment negotiations Communications, information and culture
Mr João Deus de Pinheiro Mr Pedroal Flynn	Social affairs, immigration and judicial affairs Science, research and development Agriculture
Mr Antonio Rubert Mr René Stahen Mr Joannis Paleokrassas Mr Reniero Vanni d'Archirafi	Environment and fisheries Internal market and financial institutions

Dutch DC10 pilots relive moments before Faro crash

Investigators will be keen to assess how far wind was to blame

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

THE pilots of the Dutch DC10 which crashed in Portugal with the loss of 54 lives provided investigators yesterday with the first full description of the last few moments of their ill-fated attempt to land in conditions which required flying skills of the highest order.

Without even realising it, they may have encountered windshear — one of the most feared of all meteorological conditions — at the most critical time of landing.

The phenomenon is so common in parts of America and the Far East that well over 100 airports have now installed sophisticated warning devices to enable pilots to divert before

they enter the danger zone. Most new aircraft are also fitted with detection equipment which gives an indication on the instrument panel and some of the latest even have an insistent voice warning of "windshear".

Because the problem is less common in Europe, European airports, including Faro, do not provide the necessary monitoring equipment and the DC10 is not fitted with detection instruments. Pilots are, however, now routinely trained how to fly through the conditions — also known as microbursts — where the behaviour of the wind has been likened to that of water tipped from a bucket onto a flat

surface. At first they experience a sudden sharp increase in airspeed as they fly into high head winds, then a hammer blow from above as they fly through the main down-draught followed within seconds by a tailwind which effectively causes the aircraft to stall.

In regular six-monthly checks on pilots' flying skills in simulators such conditions are recreated and pilots are told how to go against their natural instincts by pushing the throttles forward even though the airspeed is increasing so that they have enough power to counter the sudden tailwind.

All pilots who fly in Europe in winter are used to landing in turbulent and squally conditions. Normally a DC10 should not attempt to land if crosswinds exceed between 30 and 35 knots and pilots are instructed to find an alternate diversion airport or wait for conditions to improve. Even below that level "seat of the pants" flying skills are required to maintain the aircraft in line with the runway and to touch down smoothly.

Pointing the nose in the direction of the wind the pilot "crabs" along the extended centre-line of the runway until he is about 200ft above the ground. By talking constantly to air traffic controllers he can obtain the latest information about the strength of the wind and, if it appears to be too high, go around again.

The pilot of the DC10 made one such attempt at landing and on his second attempt was hit by either the second phase of windshear or a sudden gust from his right. By now he was almost at touch down point, the plane's ailerons moving up and down rapidly as he twisted the control wheel to counter the wind which was trying to push his wing upwards. Investigators will want to establish just how strong the wind was.



Cup of comfort: a woman wounded in the Dutch DC10 crash at Faro in southern Portugal giving her baby a drink before flying home to Holland yesterday

Experts discount sanctions as cause of Libyan disaster

By DAVID WATTS, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

EVIDENCE grew last night that the Libyan Arab Airlines Boeing 727 which crashed on an internal flight yesterday with the loss of 157 lives had collided with a military aircraft. Experts denied that the crash could have been due to a shortage of spare parts caused by sanctions.

The sanctions include a ban on sales of aviation spare parts to Libya. Major Abdel-Salam Jalloud, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's deputy as Libyan leader, said last month that this was putting passengers' lives at risk. "Flights of Libyan Airlines are about to stop ... Every day there are dozens of flights on which passengers are in danger because of the lack of spare parts and maintenance. This is mass murder," he told the Libyan equivalent of parliament.

The supply of aircraft and the insurance of passengers and machines are also banned under the United Nations sanctions. These were im-

posed to try to get the Libyan government to hand over for international investigation two men suspected of involvement in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 which was brought down over Lockerbie, killing all 270 on board. The crash of Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 1103 occurred a day after the fourth anniversary of Lockerbie.

France also wants Tripoli's co-operation in the investigation of four other Libyans suspected of an attack on a French UTA airliner in 1989 which killed 170 people. The Boeing 727 is one of the world's best-selling aircraft, 1,831 having been delivered by the time it went out of production about ten years ago. Its engines, Pratt and Whitney JTSD turboprops, have been used across the whole family of Boeing aircraft and have amassed millions of flying hours. Libyan Arab Airlines flew about ten 727s until yesterday's accident

but had been prevented from buying the aircraft's high-technology successors, the Boeing 757 and 767.

"There are multiple sources of supply for spares as long as you can get them into the country," one expert said. "The major effort has been to stop new technology engines and aircraft getting into the country. I don't know how you would stop old spare parts getting in."

The 600-mile border with Egypt is porous. It would be a simple matter to get either parts or expertise into the country. With aerospace industries burgeoning from Singapore to Brazil, there is no shortage of firms with the competence.

Some countries have been less than rigorous about observing sanctions, and until quite recently it was reported that Sudanese airlines were continuing to serve Tripoli.

Crash report, page 1

Shadows fall on temple of song

FROM CHARLES BREMNER
IN PARIS

Few tears were shed when the Folies Bergère closed its show this week and faced an uncertain future. The old revue had declined into a tarnished shadow of its former glory. A threat to the Olympia music hall is another matter.

A temple of popular song, the black-and-red theatre on the Boulevard des Capucines has been home to great performers since La Goulue, Toulouse-Lautrec's dancer friend, opened the show in 1893. Past regulars include Maurice Chevalier, Mistinguette, Piaf, Trenet, Brel, Brassens, Montand, Aznavour, Sinatra and the Beatles.

The spectre of demolition first emerged last summer when Société Générale, the bank which owns the whole block, raised doubts about renewing the lease next year. The alarm was sounded again this week when *Le Monde* reported plans to redevelop the district, between the Madeleine and the Opéra.

Jack Lang, the culture minister, has made the right noises in defence of the Olympia, but there is a suspicion that as a middle-of-the-road commercial operation which makes a profit, the hall fails his passion for art which is either high or very low-brow.

The bank, which wants to develop the prime site for boutiques and offices, has promised to keep the 2,000-seat hall in some form, but it is studying options which range from demolition to moving it underground. A committee of the producers, negotiating with the bank, is worried that rebuilding will destroy the soul of the theatre. "Put a pick-axe into the Olympia and the ghosts will vanish," said Jean-Michel Boris, the manager.

M Lang could preserve the building in the time it takes to sign his name. In 1988 he decreed a category of *lieu de mémoire* when Fouquet's, the fashionable restaurant on the Champs Elysées, was threatened with being turned into a shopping centre.

In the losing campaign against "franglais", academics have subjected Mitterrand to another petition over his government's failure to take tougher action against American English. The danger from linguistic invaders has been dramatised by a new historical dictionary. To the dismay of many patriots, this reveals that French has saved only 68 words of true Gallic origin in the onslaught of Latin, Germanic and other tongues.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lottery pays out £812m

Madrid: Spain's Christmas lottery, said to be the world's richest and known as *El Gordo* (the Fat One), yesterday paid £812 million in tax-free winnings on thousands of ticket-holders, including King Juan Carlos.

The five-digit number picked for the grand prize paid £1.6 million to holders of each of the 95 tickets bearing the same number. Since each ticket cost about £165 to buy, most were split among friends and families. The lottery marks the start of the holiday season and is more popular in Spain than soccer or Santa.

King Juan Carlos won £85 from a ticket purchased for £13 by a friend, who sends the monarch a ticket numbered 00000 every year. (AP)

Eurocorps deal

Brussels: The Franco-German army corps — the Eurocorps, which might later be expanded to include soldiers from Belgium, Spain and Luxembourg — could act as part of Nato forces in defence and peacekeeping operations, according to an agreement reached between the United States and its Nato allies yesterday. (Reuters)

Nazis banned

Bonn: Germany banned a fourth neo-Nazi militant group, the National Offensive, in a continuing clampdown on anti-foreigner and anti-Semitic violence. The interior ministry said the group had about 140 members. (Reuters)

Envoy killed

Kampala: Gunmen killed an Italian diplomat in the Ugandan capital, Salvatore Valvo, 63, was waylaid at the gate of his residence, north of the city, his wife Sarah said. He tried to fight off the gunmen but was overpowered and shot at close range. (AFP)

Trees suffering

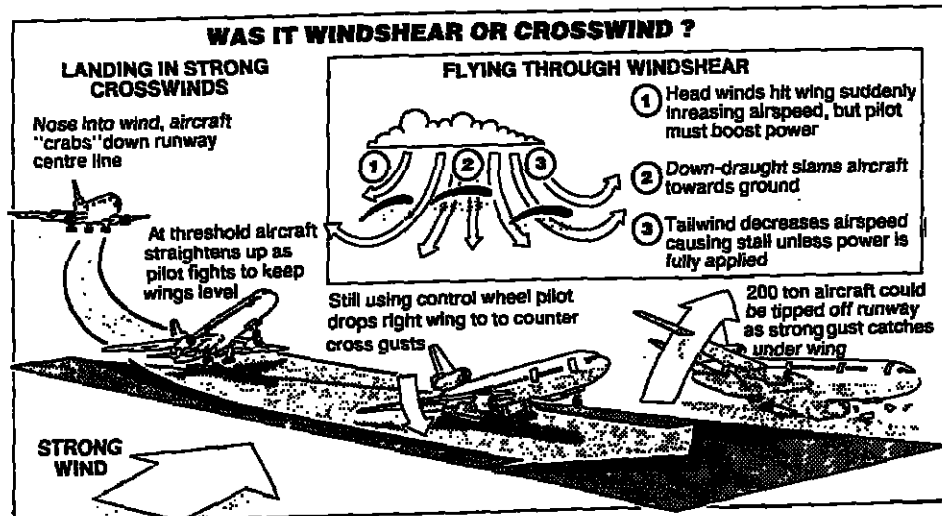
Brussels: Europe's trees are sick and getting worse, according to a European Commission report based on a survey of 83,000 trees in 19 countries. More than one in five had signs of damage from atmospheric pollution. (Reuters)

Open market

Helsinki: Parliament approved a law allowing foreigners to buy businesses and property in Finland from next year. The left-wing opposition accused the centre-right government of selling Finland's unspoiled forests and lakesides for francs and marks. (AP)

Gay weddings

Frankfurt: The district court here has told registry officials to accept applications for homosexual marriages but the decision might not stand as the officials are expected to appeal to a higher court. Same-sex marriages are illegal in Germany. (AP)



IT'S NOT TOO LATE

We can deliver up until the 24th December so it's never too late to say Happy Christmas with Interflora. To send flowers, visit or phone your local Interflora florist or out of shop hours ring the Interflora Flowerline on 0529 304545.

Success has a thin time



SARAH MOWER

Oh good. Crash dieting can be fatal? I'm so glad the news has come in time for Christmas. It'll make all the difference to all of us who wake up on January 1 feeling gross and swearing to lose half a stone in a week. Won't it?

Fat chance. Women may be in a different league from men when it comes to absorbing the latest health news, and acting upon it, but one thing we'll never give up is dieting.

In a world where thinness is integral to a woman's judgment of her success, the thought of being a slim corpse at your own untimely funeral is less likely to be reckoned a tragedy than an achievement.

Perverse? Stupid? Of course. But who among us is equal to prising apart "thin" and "successful"? It doesn't matter how much you're paid or how famous you are, if your hip bones don't stick out, you haven't made it, baby.

American women are most explicit about this. Liz Tiller, the editor of the *American* magazine, *Harper's Bazaar*, says that when she delivers speeches about the pressure and rewards of her move to the States, gathering a new staff and relaunching in record time, she has one sure fire punchline: "But the best thing of all," she says, looking around her female audience, "is that I lost 16 pounds." Whereupon, women leap to their feet cheering.

Conversely, Lord help you if it goes the other way. Last week, in *The New York Times*, Stella Schindler, a judge, wrote of her highly influential but necessarily sedentary job, "I can change a child's life... give voice to people... ensure that rights are protected. If only I could lose 15 pounds, it would be the best job in the world." Like Oprah Winfrey, who has made herself the highest-paid woman in television, it is not enough for this judge to be powerful, recognised, a name to conjure with. Unless she's thin, too, she cannot count herself as totally satisfied.

Almost, it doesn't matter how mad a woman's behav-

iour has to be to keep in place all the elements of wonderfulness that are necessary for true success. So long as she's thin, fine. I know women in New York — already overworked individuals who are patently in need of sleep — who get up at 5am to go to the gym and kick the hell out of a punchbag for two hours before work. For many, though, violent exercise is but a preliminary torture in the day-long battle against weight-gain.

The last time I was there, I found myself sitting next to a millionaire at a dinner. After scarcely lifting her face from the plate during four courses, she abruptly left the table and after 45 minutes,

hadn't reappeared. I started to worry. "Aw, don't," said the person sitting on my other side. "She's only in the bathroom throwing up."

Instinctively, we are horrified, saddened, even angered by others' self-destructive strategies for keeping off weight. But how ever bizarre, we also know it's a "normal" madness. If we're shocked by extreme-sounding stories from America, we shouldn't kid ourselves that things are any better here.

I well remember the editor of a British mass market women's magazine — not a slimming magazine — who remarked that the one distinguishing feature of her readers was that they all wanted to lose a stone. That was Mrs Average, UK.

After Christmas, we all know we'll be in for a bout of listening to some otherwise clever, together, achieving girlfriend who will be complaining about wanting to lose weight. It will be tedious and you will have to grit your teeth to stop screaming, for God's sake shut up, you're lovely as you are!

The thing is this: no matter how much you may dole out genuine approval and reassurance to your friend, you know in your heart you'll never be able to apply it to yourself. Not until you're nine stone, anyway. Is there a doctor in the world who can do a thing to change this? I doubt it. Happy Christmas eating!

"The best thing of all is that I lost 16 pounds!"

Are high-tech special effects the most effective way to thrill? Rosie Millard reports

Get your teeth into some special effects

According to the director, Nigel Finch, "As soon as you take on a story set in the supernatural, you know you will embrace the world of the special effects: it's part of the fun of it." For his latest project, a television adaptation of Heinrich Marschner's 19th-century Gothic opera, *The Vampyre*, which starts on BBC2 next Tuesday, he has

embraced a series of stunning special effects which transform it from, say, a singing version of *Capital City* into a bloody nightmare. And fun it certainly is. Apart from transforming our satanic anti-hero, Mr Ripley, into a fully-fanged vampire via a snarling wolf, the production includes exploding crucifixes and a car which gushes blood.

The variation and sophistication of the effects is startling, if only because they are directly comparable with their counterparts on the big screen or pop video. Given an audience increasingly familiar with films which casually melt people into pools of water, or with Michael Jackson videos which transform the human face into all its racial variations in seemingly the same shot, the production has been wise to avoid

cranky old stage make-up and instead gone in for £45,000-worth of special effects. Looking directly to special effects movies such as *Terminator 2*, which he admits is "the benchmark", Mr Finch has used "morphing" (from anamorphosis), a computer-generated "transformation", to achieve the effect of a vampire appearing without a discernible mix. In only four frames, Ripley is transformed from a normal yuppie into a yuppie sporting red eyeballs, long hair and huge fangs.

Mitch Mitchell, the series' special effects supervisor, explains morphing in terms of a face being drawn onto a

rubber balloon. "If you wanted to change it into the face of a dog," he says, "you would attach lots of pieces of thread onto each drawn line. You then pull each thread in such a way as to make the human face move into the shape of a dog's head. Then you draw the face of a dog onto another balloon in the same way, and pull those threads so it resembles the shape of a human

face. Transformation occurs when you mix from one balloon to the other and you see the human face apparently change to a dog's head."

Seamless transformations are not, however, what the original opera was about: when man becomes vampire, Marschner's music builds up, signalling a huge dramatic moment of theatricality. Unfortunately, the editors at the Moving Picture film company who created *The Vampyre*'s effects achieved their transformation so perfectly that the moment was almost in danger of being overlooked by the audience. "Ripley just kind of shook his head, and he was a vampire," Mr Finch says. "You might almost have missed it."

Indeed, the digital, computerised effects so beloved by the genre of Schwarzenegger movies, have become so streamlined that they are in danger of losing the very effect they have been created to achieve. With no creaking trap doors or creepy shadows to conceal trip wires or puppet manipulators, any suggestion of tension or horror is lost.

The film critic, Kim Newman, thinks this is a problem for the contemporary horror movie. "All these special effects

are great for conveying liquid metal robots, but for really scary supernatural scenes, they tend not to work. People are so pleased with creating them, that they tend to be shown off in broad daylight, as it were. They've become just like those musicals which get ready for the big set piece, and the audience ends up with just a sense of spectacle and wonder, rather than involvement."

"It's interesting that in Francis Ford Coppola's new movie, *Dracula*, he just uses antique trickery, like people leaping out of hidden trap doors."

The same could be said for *The Vampyre*. Although the latest computerised transformations are applied to the action, Mr Finch has added them to mechanical devices involving blood and gore. The vampire's transformation is drenched in blood, as if to cancel out the effortless skill of his "morph" from man to beast. Old-fashioned tricks involving weights, explosives and traps are in evidence throughout the production.

One scene involves garage staff opening the boot of the vampire's Mercedes with a crowbar. We are forewarned by the threatening music to expect something nasty, and indeed, when they force the boot open, hundreds of gallons of blood come shooting out, an effect created by hoses, pipes, weights and a lot of crimson-coloured water.

"You don't want to have such amazing effects that people will sit back and think, 'How did they make that?'" Mr Finch says. "It stops the motion of the show." Even when the vampire gets his come-uppance, courtesy of a crucifix through the heart, Mr Finch has relied upon a polystyrene prop on a wire, set off by an explosive. "There is a kind of innocence about the earlier techniques of special effects which people respond to," he says. "For this reason, I have been somewhat frugal with the electronic effects. People won't gasp with amazement for effects alone. You need the fundamentals of story-telling for a really successful production."

Even though he has had a wealth of modern technology to play with, Mr Finch has been dogged by problems all directors would recognise. "We had this wonderful moment where Satan would be transformed from a goat to a human. However, when the goat he hired appeared on set, it was so freaked out that it started attacking people. We gave up with that one."



A changed man: computerised "morphing" has been used in *The Vampyre*'s impressionistic transformations of man to vampire via wolf



Blood bath: gallons of crimson-coloured water shoot out of a car boot in a mechanical special effect for BBC2's opera, *The Vampyre*

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Does that gun refuse to fit snugly under your outfit? One women's designer has the answer

A sure-fire winner

John Wayne tied his six-gun around his waist and no one questioned his sense of style. Al Capone opted for the accessory of a violin case to conceal his machine gun. And of course, there was the immaculately dressed 007 whose DJ was always unwrinkled despite the Walther FPK under his left arm.

In the movies men wear guns as if they are part of their ensemble, like a Rolex or a signet ring: it is a sign of good grooming and invariably stylish. But sexual equality in the gun-toting business has brought a particular set of problems for the female bodyguard, special agent or safety-conscious woman-on-the-go who needs to look glamorous while packing a Glock automatic.

Bond could always solve the problem of the bulging armpit or jutting jacket with a quick visit to his Savile Row tailor but today's women are not so fortunate and until now heavy hips, an unusually buxom breast or unnatural bagginess around the bottom was just part of the job. But now American women have Linda Mutchnick.

"Women can handle guns as well as men but because of our physiques we can't conceal

them as easily. If a woman wears a holster, for instance, the swell of her hips causes the barrel of the gun to be pushed out, and the butt to be pushed in, which can be painful," says the 49-year-old Mrs Mutchnick, an American designer whose new line of clothes caters specifically to women who carry weapons for self-protection.

"Off the rack garments just don't accommodate the additional bulk of two-and-a-half to three inches of hard steel in addition to everything else," she says. Mrs Mutchnick should know. She has been carrying weapons for more than a decade after receiving a series of threatening phone calls and owns several Berettas and a Smith & Wesson.

She has tried tucking her gun into form-fitting jeans, only to be jabbed in the rib cage as she slides into the seat of her Jaguar. She tried wearing a shoulder holster under the jacket she sported for her job as a legal secretary, but to no avail. It wrecked the sleekness of the outfit and she felt as if she could not get at the gun

fast enough in case of an emergency.

But with her new company, PistolERA, she hopes to provide new opportunities for women to wear "comfortable, concealing, stylish" clothes — and carry a gun. Priced on

average between \$110 to \$275 (£70 to £176), the new PistolERA (a play on the Spanish word for gunman) line includes jackets, waistcoats, trousers and skirts, all of which are customised to fit clients according to their size and the kind of weapon they pack. "I ask clients what kind of gun they're carrying and

where, which determines the strength of the interfacing and the gauge of elastic I use," she says. Her blouson style jacket is made to carry three different guns. It is designed for the law enforcement officer, rather than the professional woman she usually sells to.

So far, Mrs Mutchnick has received more orders than she can handle. Having only finished her brochure and catalogue at the end of October, she has already had to expand her dressmaking team to five and she is hiring again.

But PistolERA's sudden success is not surprising. More than 15 million women own guns in America and an increasing number of women have begun carrying them since the mid-1980s. The National Rifle Association's (NRA) 33,000 trainers now report that 50 to 70 per cent of the people who take their basic pistol courses are female, compared with only 3 per cent in the late 1980s.

Many gun manufacturers, such as Smith & Wesson, have even been publicising special "ladies' lines" of guns featur-

ing smaller handgrips and guns that are easier to handle and conceal. Gun accessories specifically aimed at women are also becoming more popular. The discerning woman can now order special purses, holsters, bras and girdles from such outlets as the Bang Bang Boutique, Feminine Protection and Lady Be Safe.

Designer dressing has been a part of American law enforcement for some years. Agents working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) carry weapons as a matter of course and both the sexes generally carry their guns in a holster that fits on to a belt.

The FBI has also designed a handbag for women agents that allows for a quick draw in an emergency and makes it difficult for criminals to seize it in a struggle. But for America's hoods, visible firepower is still more important than the designer look. "Criminals carry guns any way they can," says Stephen Markardt, an FBI agent. "They don't shop at the same professional equipment stores we do. They stick them in their waistbands or stuff them in their pockets."

RENE RILEY-ADAMS

SH Thomas custom a very I We will New Year in Tues

Walking on the wild side

Suzanne Capper
died violently after
drifting into a world
of drugs and
hopelessness, reports
Jon Ronson

The walk between the bus stop on Oxford Road and the Ritz nightclub on Whitworth Street in Manchester is about 500 yards, but you would be lucky if you were stopped for money fewer than half-a-dozen times. Some hold guitars, but don't really know how to play them. Others huddle in doorways, skinny youngsters with drug dependencies and skinny dogs. One familiar face, recognisable by his overzealous and outdated mohawk haircut, holds a sign out that reads "30p Bus." He grants, and indicates the sign, because he has no vocal chords.

Later, inside the Ritz, you see the same faces, because entry is only £1 and you get a token for a free pint before 11pm. They sit in the corridor in the basement near the cloakroom and beg money from the students. The thump of the bass from the fire doors swing open and closed in time to the beat. This is the neighbourhood that 16-year-old Suzanne Capper began drifting into in the months before her death last week.

Manchester, like Liverpool, is suffering from an economic imbalance. Superficially, it is a city of growth. Next year it will play host to an international environmental conference. This autumn, it held the highly successful "In the City" pop seminar. It has a small, but fighting, chance of staging the Olympics in 2000. Expensive canal-side cafes are springing up faster than you can count them: the joke around town is that you can sip cappuccino all day and gaze out at the corpses floating past.

Last week, John Stalker, the former deputy chief constable of Greater Manchester police force, was quoted as saying that in Manchester a gun is now considered to be a fashion accessory. Crack has hit hard, and it is a drug that no amount of governmental propaganda can overdramatise. Crack takes away your conscience. It encourages violent tendencies. Users become very dependent on it, and the effects wear off after only 20 minutes. Crack has a strange hold over parts of Manchester. If you are walking alone late at night through Hulme or Moss Side or the tough estates of Moston or Blakeley or Cheetham Hill, you can



On the streets: a homeless 17-year-old youth is provided with soup by a Christian group in the centre of Manchester

expect to be mugged. The muggers are fast, professional and armed. When they have taken your money, they don't run away, they stand there and tell you to run away.

Suzanne Capper came from Moston's New Estate, a product of the "built-to-collapse" housing policy of the 1960s. A predominantly white neighbourhood, it is also highly sectarian. There are regular fights between the youths of New Moston and the youths of the original Moston. Many on the estate come from generations of poor north Mancunians, decent people, but people who, as one resident says, "usually spawn one weirdo child per crop". Others are middle-class drop-outs, fans of the "grunge" culture, of pop groups such as Nirvana and Mudhoney. Drugs are rife. Those on heroin are a risk only to themselves (the crime is stealing, not physical assault), but those on crack and amphetamines can become desperate.

Suzanne had been held hostage at a house near the estate for a week,

starved of food and water, and injected with drugs. Her teeth were hammered out. She was thrown off a cliff. Her head was shaved, she was stripped naked and finally set on fire at Romiley Park, near Stockport. Suzanne died three days after she was discovered by a dustman on his early-morning rounds.

Moston's New Estate is built around a few shops and the Kestrel pub. A couple of burnt-out cars litter the street near the sandpit, near where Angela and her baby daughter live. Angela, who is in her early twenties, was a friend of Suzanne, and one of a growing breed of Manchester drifters. They don't work, have no money, and rarely leave the houses that they find themselves living in before dark. They just get through the day somehow. Making a coffee can last an hour. A trip to the shops is an afternoon out, especially on the estate, as the short-cut through the side

streets is a war zone, and the main roads can add a mile to the journey. It is difficult to ascertain the extent of homelessness among the young in Manchester. Few actually live on the streets, because there's such a predominance of vacant properties: from disused textile warehouses to empty Hulme flats, the occupants of which fled the neighbourhood violence.

The city council has a positive attitude towards single-person homelessness, often renting flats (paid for by housing benefit) to people as young as 16. They accept 10,000 single homeless applicants a year. Angela makes me coffee, and, in the corner, Lauren plays with their pet rooster. "We used to live in Blakeley," Angela says. "But some guy moved in and started smashing all the plates every time Manchester City lost, so we came out here."

About 20 minutes after my arrival, there is a violent knock on the door, and the rooster springs to life. "Wait here," Angela says to me, startled. "Look after Lauren."

runs to me and jumps on my knee. Her mother grabs the dog and heads to the door. It is made of thin, easily breakable wood, so the knocking is a formality. If anyone wanted to get in, one kick would do it.

"Angela," shouts an urgent voice through the door. "It's Paul. Sue's fallen down the stairs and there's blood everywhere. I need to borrow £5 to get her a taxi to hospital."

"Piss off," Angela shouts. "Phone an ambulance from the callbox."

"I've broken," Paul shouts back. "Please! I think she's dying."

"I've got the dog here," Angela replies. After a moment, Paul leaves.

Back in the living room, Angela shrugs. "Who's Sue?" I say. "Paul's three-year-old daughter," she says. "I'd have lent him a liver," I say.

"There's nothing wrong with Sue," Angela explains. "He does this every week. Comes up with new ways of trying to get money out of us all to buy drugs." She chuckles. "That's a new one getting a taxi to hospital."

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Better to give than volunteer

Seasonal offers of help to charities are not always totally welcome

I don't expect other people to make donations of this size," said the Hungarian-born billionaire, George Soros, who has just given \$50 million to charities to be used to help people in the former Yugoslavia. All the same, most of us would like to give something, and many are keen to do more than simply write a cheque.

Adam Woolf, of Crisis, the organisation which tackles the problems of homelessness, both at Christmas and throughout the year, and which is in its 25th year of operations, says: "We are always overwhelmed with volunteers at this time of year, but we recruit in November. Some take umbrage when we turn them down."

Crisis organises three 24-hour Christmas shelters for the homeless in London which are open from 23 to 30 December. Along with most similar initiatives, they run an induction evening for volunteers. Anyone who misses the course will not be admitted. Liam Black, who runs the Manchester Crisis, with five centres open across the north-west over Christmas, says: "Turning up on the day is no good. If somebody turns up who is a stranger they will just get in everybody's way."

All volunteers have to be vetted. Daphne Gore, an administrator at the St Martin's in the Field day care centre in central London, which plans a Christmas day party for 50 of its regular clients, says, "People's altruism is generally very good, but this place is a sanctuary for some people, so we have to guard them from intrusion. Neurotic people are no use. You have to be a fairly substantial person in yourself."

Charity officials are concerned that people forget the problem for the rest of the year. John Evans, the assistant director of the Edinburgh Council for the Single Homeless, says: "It's not an exaggeration to say most homeless people can pick up three Christmas dinners a day at this time of year. We have to make people realise that the homeless are with us all year."

All charities emphasise that financial donations are always welcome, even if hands-on help is not. Since it launched its Cold Front Appeal three weeks ago for clothes and blankets for the people in Iraq and the former Yugoslavia, Oxfam has received 1.5 million items. It expects 500,000. But Peter Smith, head of fundraising, said that money was "substantially" on last year. "People still want to give, but cannot afford to. They donate old clothes instead. The problem is, we need cash to be able to



Giving: Salvation Army

transport the clothes to these countries."

Manchester Crisis has enough food, but still requires clothes and bedding. But Mr Black stresses, "We need proper stuff that's sorted and clean. Good quality coats and jumpers are appreciated, silk shirts and Bermuda shorts are not."

People with specific skills are also required. "Doctors and counsellors are very useful," Mr Black says. "A lot of people who have been made redundant are able to offer us their professional knowledge, which is a great help."

There is also a demand for fundraisers. Crisis is looking for volunteers for door-to-door collections in London from now until February. "The more the better. You can't have too many people doing that," Mr Woolf says.

Margaret Kirk, of the Salvation Army, which organises Christmas lunches for old and lonely people, says that people who want to volunteer help should try contacting their local branch, whose number will be in the telephone book. "Some might need last minute help, driving people or helping wash up, but be prepared to be converted or saved."

The advice is to volunteer early next year and to remember, for the moment, that charity begins at home. Help the Aged asks for people to keep an eye on their elderly neighbours and make the effort to spend some time with them.

The Charity Commission also warns people to be wary about who they are giving to. They advise anyone in doubt to ask for identification, and a Charity Commission registration number.

JULIA LLEWELLYN SMITH

For details of local branches, contact: Crisis: 071-377 0489, Oxfam: 272 Banbury Rd, Oxford, OX2 7DZ. Help the Aged: St James's Walk, London, EC1R 0BE, Tel: 071-253 0253.

Churches await the popular Christmas eve services whose record attendances can prove to be a mixed blessing

Waiting for the midnight hour

Churches in Britain are bracing themselves for the Christmas rush. Midnight Mass, the Christmas eve holy eucharist, is the one time of the year when churches can reach thousands who otherwise would never be seen inside a church.

But priests and clergy have to perform a delicate balancing act, keeping order in line with the solemnity of the occasion while not alienating those who might have had one drink too many in the pub.

Such problems are often confined to city centres, and where they spill over into church it is the historic, tradi-

tional buildings which tend to attract the liveliest midnight Mass revellers. Five years ago, at Westminster Cathedral, one reveller picked up priceless religious reliquaries and threw them at Cardinal Basil Hume as he was celebrating Mass.

"There are places with horror stories to tell," says Canon Michael Perham, precentor at Norwich Cathedral. "There have been occasions where people have had to be removed because they clearly are the worse for wear and a nuisance to those around them."

Midnight Mass at Norwich will begin at 11.15pm. "In many churches," Canon

Perham says, "some of the most regular prefer to go to church the next morning instead. Therefore, you have the rather strange feeling of a packed church, but not necessarily packed with people who know what is going on."

"It is the one occasion in the year when a great many present might be non-communicants. A lot go up to the altar not knowing what the rules are and following the crowd. But I think God deals with that rather well. Increasing numbers of churches encourage non-communicants to receive a blessing."

Cathedrals can, simply by their architecture and sense of presence, overwhelm, inspire and calm an over-excited congregation. In some smaller churches, the clergy attempt to inspire the necessary reverence in advance.

In his latest parish magazine, the Rev Philip Nixon, vicar of Goring, on the Thames in Oxfordshire, reminds readers about the custom of refraining from alcohol before Holy Communion. This is a gentle hint that the popular midnight Mass is more than just another celebration leading up to the secular indulgences of Christmas day.

Dr Nixon says that worshippers at his 11.30pm midnight Mass "ought to be aware that we expect them to take it seriously, rather than treat it as just another Christmas party". He does say that midnight Mass goes at his 12th-century Norman church are gener-

ally well-behaved, although, "there have been times when people have been a bit noisy and not known when to stop talking. Also, I think people get more out of it if their wits are not befuddled."

"I grew up in the Midlands, and there were times when two-thirds of the congregation were in a quite disgraceful state. Goring is not like that."

According to recent academic studies, Christmas was first celebrated in Rome in 354, when the first Mass was the Festal Mass, at St Peter's at 9am. According to *The Liturgical Year*, by the German scholar, Adolph Adam, a midnight Mass was added some

time after the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore was built in honour of Mary, mother of Jesus, in the fifth century.

Scholars believe the service grew out of "stations", or eucharistic assemblies, held by the Pope at three places on Christmas day. The first was at midnight at the chapel at Maria Maggiore, which contained a replica of the manger.

Midnight Mass died out in the English church after the Reformation, and was not reintroduced until the 19th century by the high churchmen of the Oxford Movement.

It remained mainly an Anglo-Catholic phenomenon until after the second world war, when it spread throughout the church and was taken up by some free churches. The traditional English convention, a Watch Night service on New Year's eve, which was not a eucharist, has as a result almost disappeared.

Christmas in central London is one of the few times when people queue to get into

Anyone who arrives late at one is sent on to the next. The Abbey takes 2,000, St Margaret's 800 and St Matthew's several hundred. "Midnight Mass and Michaelmas are the two times when the word 'Mass' trips off the most protestant tongue," Canon Donald Gray, Rector of St Margaret's, says.

"Obviously some people have been partying before hand, but the incidence of people who are really worse for wear is quite small," says Dr Gray, who is also chaplain to the Queen and to the Speaker of the House of Commons.

"This is my sixth year here and we have never had anything embarrassing at St Margaret's. If people are in a party mood, it is the right mood for the right occasion."

A growing trend in the Roman Catholic church is to bring Midnight Mass forward to 8pm, because many women and children were staying away rather than face the streets after pub closing time on Christmas eve.

Fr Peter Foulkes, the Roman Catholic priest at Avenham and Frenchwood in Preston, has for the last eight years been holding church in a school hall.

"We do not get a problem of drunkenness," he says. "I would not say you should not have any alcohol, but there is a balance. You need somebody sensitive in the church to spot these people and in a nice way encourage them to go outside or not to make a disturbance."

RUTH GLEDHILL



Not so silent night: Christmas eve attracts a new congregation

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Bryan Appleyard

It is now unnatural, eccentric and immoral not to indulge in keeping fit and thin

Joanna Grenside appears to have faked her own abduction for fear of the eating and drinking she might have to do over Christmas. She is an aerobics teacher so the horrors of fatty food might be expected to loom especially large. To some being overweight is synonymous with being bad, stupid and socially incompetent.

Being fit and thin is a collective psychosis that afflicted 20 to 40-year-olds in the late Sixties and has now spread to cover almost the entire human lifespan. Such virtue is attached to bodily cultivation that, in certain groups, to abstain by being fat is an irredeemable moral flaw. The marketing of the paraphernalia of fitness — notably training shoes — has now abandoned the mere practicalities of the equipment in favour of the rhetoric of salvation. To be thin is to be happy; to be fit is to transcend.

The main reason for this is that, from a certain perspective, there is nothing else to do. Once the modern cult of youth superseded grace, wisdom, wit, charm, literacy and talent some time in the 1950s, then preserving the visible signs of youth became the only absolute. A cultural blackmailer had begun playing on our worst instincts: admit it, he whispered, all that stuff is fine, but this is what you want. And we admitted it like crazy, helped by the mad rationalisations of people like the jogging prophet James Fixx.

"My suspicion," he wrote, "is that the effects of running are not extraordinary at all, but quite ordinary. It is the other states, all other feelings, that are peculiar, for they are an abnegation of the way you and I are intended to feel."

You are, apparently, unnatural and eccentric when you are not running or working out. Fixx, of course, died while jogging which, for some was a good joke but for him was, presumably, a complete vindication. The human weakness on which the blackmail works is the persistent feeling that things are not quite right with us. Religion and revolutionary political ideals work in the same way — dying need not be the end or things can always be better. The keep-fit cult plays upon this discontent by persuading us that our disquiet is a function of physical failure. Some survey once found that on an average day the average person feels a little worse than average. It is a simple sleight of hand to show that this is not a predestined condition of human consciousness, but rather a corrigible flaw in the bodily machine.

On one level this cannot work. Once the idea of a physical original sin has entered the imagination, it cannot easily be eradicated. You can diet and work out forever, but the stain endures. That way lies bulimia, anorexia, faked abductions and the frenzied exercise freak perpetually watching his body.

On another level, however, it works. Exercise provides an infallible high. It squirts endorphins and glutamine into the bloodstream, generating wild euphoria, a sensation of unencumbered lightness and invulnerability. It is similar to the madness of teenagers at a "rave", some of whom die in the early hours of the morning from dehydration after eight hours of dancing.

More than that it works as transcendence. The atmosphere of a gym is sacred. People are locked in wholesome agony in strange and terrible machines which, through digital displays, impose upon them pitiless, abstract systems. And then there is the music. Abba, U2 and Aretha Franklin never fail. I recently saw some poor woman straining hopelessly at 30 kilos on the "Pec Dec". Suddenly Aretha blasted out singing *Take Another Little Piece of My Heart*, the woman's eyes closed and her arms began pumping like pistons. She was like the cripple who walks under the blessing of a televangelist.

The more perspective among you will have noticed something of a dead giveaway in the last paragraph. Yes, I go to a gym. Yes, I feel better for it. And, yes, I am trying to fight the appalling ravages of time and anticipate those of turkey. But, like the tobacco industry, I believe in moderation in all things. I have this thing under control. I have. Really.

John Habgood, Archbishop of York, considers the symbolism of kingship in the Gospels and today

The Crown at Christmas

One of the topics bound to remain high on the agenda for 1993 is the notion of sovereignty. Mass-trieth will see to that. So will the continuing struggles for identity and self-determination in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union. Nearer home, questions about the relation between sovereignty and the sovereign are unlikely to disappear. Nor are some of the internal tensions within the notion of sovereignty itself going to be resolved.

In the nation state sovereignty combines a principle of inclusion — the concentration of authority and power — with a principle of exclusion — freedom from external control. It thus has much to do with the drawing of boundaries, with what divides peoples from one another and enables them to feel separate and distinctive. It also carries strong overtones from history, both secular and religious, often charged with feelings of pride or grievance. We need no reminders that, in politics, it is a highly contentious concept, hardly suitable one might suppose as a subject for a Christmas meditation.

Nevertheless in at least one of the Christmas stories the theme of sovereignty is a central element in its meaning. Matthew's story of the three Magi contains the unusual phrase "King of the Jews". It was a phrase used only by foreigners, and elsewhere in the New Testament occurs only on the lips of Pilate, in the title over the Cross, and in the derisory shouts of the crowd.

The Magi come to the court of Herod, a supposedly powerful king yet wracked by insecurity and intrigue, and soon to demonstrate his irresponsibility and ruthlessness when he discovers the Magi have tricked him. In the midst of this unsavoury atmosphere Matthew shows us a real king, an infant totally powerless, yet heir to all the promises of God. The way he tells the story evokes strong resonances from the ideal kingship of David, from the splendour of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon, and from the hopes of a new messianic king in the Prophets of the Jews, long expected, sought, recognised and accepted by foreigners, is the same king who is later to be

tried, mocked and executed. Matthew is at pains to show us that Jesus is indeed a king, but that the symbols of kingship are broken ones.

Does this complex ambivalent imagery have anything to offer contemporary thinking about sovereignty? Perhaps it can remind us first that sovereignty is inextricably bound up with symbolism. It is as much about the way people perceive things, and feel about them, as about the ways in which authority and power are actually exercised. Although the maintenance of law and order, for instance, ultimately depends on the sanction of force, normally it relies to an enormous extent on the symbolism of a police presence. The office of president of the United States carries such huge symbolic weight that it can continue to command respect more or less

regardless of the person holding it. The fact that the president wields great power must enhance the symbolism, but to the outsider it seems as if the office itself is perceived as greater than either the power or the person.

Our own monarchy nowadays virtually has to rely on symbolism alone, and the potential danger in this for the future in focusing too much attention on the persons themselves is beginning to be recognised. The main thrust of the symbolism needs to be moved back to where it properly belongs, to the sovereign as the embodiment of the unity and history of the nation under God, and as the symbolic source of authority within it. This then defines the sovereign's role as the principal safeguard against the excessive accumulation of authority by anyone else, and as the one who

conveys a sense of national identity and significance to the multitude of people whose lives she touches.

This is all very different from the kind of sovereignty exercised by Herod and his like. Ruthless demonstrations of power, the destruction of symbols of national and religious identity, as has been happening in the former Yugoslav states, political structures riddled with insecurity and intrigue, are the counter-example to the kind of sovereignty asserted principally through symbolism. They show what happens when the balance tips in the direction of reliance on force. The defence of national sovereignty then becomes the rallying call in the service of which any brutality can be justified.

A second insight from Matthew's treatment of kingship is that the symbol is a broken one, exposed to becoming an object of derision. What kind of a king is it who cannot even save himself? What kind of sovereignty is it which allows others

to break down the barriers and set the agenda?

Clearly a nation cannot afford to carry this kind of insight too far. Yet if it is true that unrestrained nationalism can go terribly wrong, and if it is true that a large element of sovereignty is symbolic, the recognition that it is a flawed and broken symbol may be the necessary corrective to restrain its excesses.

Toyotas manufactured in Britain and sold in France may give a healthy boost to our economy and an equally healthy candid recognition that no country in today's world can live in isolation or have total control over its own affairs, need not threaten symbols of national identity, but simply expose them as not expressing the whole truth about us.

To treat sovereignty as a broken symbol is not to deride it, still less to bury it. It is to open it up to new ways of thinking about the tension between centralised authority and national independence. T.S. Eliot wondered whether the Magi had witnessed a birth or a death in journeying to acknowledge their newborn king. The answer surely was — both.



Habgood: warning

How to start a world war

The West's blundering in Bosnia can only make matters worse

So the policy has failed. The Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, has not been toppled by Western pressure. The tightening of Douglas Hurd's noose has merely increased the flow of blood to his head. Washington's threat of war crimes charges against Serbian extremists predictably boosted them to a quarter of the seats in parliament. The American secretary of state, Lawrence Eagleburger, must be crassest politician in the West. The election was loaded, but nobody is claiming Mr Milosevic really lost.

So stupid is Western policy towards Serbia that I rather think everybody is on Mr Milosevic's side. Politicians should repeat three times a day before breakfast: "Economic Sanctions Never Work". Sanctions against Serbia have done what sanctions always do: entrench those in power, breed nationalism and encourage self-sufficiency. There is no case of a wicked regime, democratic or dictatorial, being brought down by sanctions, and a dozen cases of the opposite. (I am still waiting for Saddam to be toppled by Mr Hurd's enraged, impoverished middle classes.) The West's election policy has merely made heroes of men such as Zeljko Raznatovic, whose ghastly doings are pornographically publicised by the Western media.

Undaunted by the collapse of one ill-considered policy — the toppling of Mr Milosevic — George Bush and John Major have decided on an even more ill-considered one. It is called a no-fly zone. Mr Major unwisely identified himself with it yesterday flying to the Adriatic.

The boy-in-the-bomber-from-the-carrier has suddenly become the Sir Galahad of the New World Order. His high-tech surgical strikes can "take out" Serbian fighter-bombers (none of which have flown for



weeks, but no matter). He can flatten Serbian guns. If the guns are unreportedly moved into villages, he can flatten villages as well. Two can play the ethnic cleansing game. Watch those Serb villages burn, baby, burn. That will give Mr Milosevic and his thugs a bloody nose. That will stop them prying their vile tricks on plucky Kosovo. Let's show those Serbian rapists the business end of an F-16. That is the kind of talk they like on Capitol Hill and in the *New York Times*. Now Mr Eagleburger can walk tall on the Georgetown dinner circuit.

That Mr Major has felt obliged to go along with this complete change of policy — from relief to war — is wretched indeed. Mr Eagleburger has even implied that relief convoys may have to stop, lest they get in the way of his possibly less than surgical bombs. Both Cyrus

Vance and the aid organisers are appalled. Not just United Nations troops but civilian truck convoys will be regarded as hostile. (The civilian drivers are the true heroes of the relief effort at least soldiers and publicity-seeking politicians have armoured cars.)

We now have the ultimate interventionist obscenity: Sarajevans starving while Americans bomb the Bosnian countryside for the sake of prime-time footage. The policy has no sensible humanitarian goal, such as offering sanctuary to refugees. It clearly increases tension. It is that subtle shift in objective which lets weak politicians off tough decisions, but which terrifies soldiers. In this case the shift is from a delicate relief operation to fighting on one side in a civil war. An American air attack on Serbian forces will exult the hardliners

in Belgrade and suck the outside world into war.

At this point the intervention lobby asks, "Well what would you do instead?" as if bombing Serbs was at least a comforting thought that did not overtax the brain. The only honest answer is not to do what is being done, to revert to strictly civilian relief even if that means standing outside the theatre of war. We did not become militarily involved in Ethiopia when civil war was causing dreadful suffering. Likewise we are not fighting in Sudan or Armenia or Afghanistan. We generously plume our charity into other people's conflicts but do not take on the burden of resolving them. We adhere scrupulously to the oldest maxim of charity, which is to avoid the use of force at all costs, even if force may offer a short cut to the needy. In Bosnia, from the moment UN

troops arrived, aid workers feared, the pressure would be on to become party to the war. America now wants to fight this war on the side of the underdog, thus merely prolonging a horrific conflict. This will postpone an inevitable settlement carving up Bosnia. It will increase the chance of murderous gangs descending on Kosovo or Macedonia.

War can always be made to seem attractive in absentia. The West can put hundreds of thousands of troops into Bosnia, into Macedonia, into the Yugoslav province of Kosovo (which means invading Serbia). The colour of their berets would not matter: to Serbs they would be the enemies of an elected leader, who would become a Slav hero. These troops would be fighting the most awful war imaginable across the mountains and passes of the Balkans.

forming shifting alliances, accused of incessant atrocities, with no clear political or military objective.

This is the way much larger wars start. On Monday of last week in Helsinki the Russian foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, made a spoof speech. He pretended that Boris Yeltsin had been ousted by conservatives at the Peoples' Congress. He declared that Russian imperialism was back. The vast and unemployed Russian army was summoned to aid the Serbian Slavs of the Balkans. Russia had taken too much humiliation from the West. The country was mobilising to seize back the Soviet empire.

The following day, to Mr Kozyrev's undoubted horror, Mr Yeltsin was indeed ousted by the Congress. I was in Moscow and found nobody treating Mr Kozyrev's speech as funny anymore. A post-Yeltsin Russia may not plunge into a Balkan war, but do you want to take that risk? It could certainly use its UN veto against American air action. If America and perhaps Nato proceeded with the present escalation outside the UN, what then?

It is never easy to choose a moment in the preliminary to a senseless war to pull back and say this may be evil but not so great an evil as we are about to unleash. When your soldiers are not yet dying and your bombs not yet slaughtering civilians, war has the best times. Today's "thin red line of heroes" are politicians in Sarajevo and reporters in Bak jackets. But when the guns begin to shoot the only question will be, "Who got us into this mess?"

The American historian, Francis Fukuyama, wrote last year that liberal democracy had triumphed across the globe. He appears to be changing his line. He wrote on Monday that the West must intervene to protect ethnic minorities throughout Eastern Europe, including Russians in former satellite states: "Let us hope that the West's 'reluctant reluctance to become involved in Yugoslavia will not be repeated in the case of the former Soviet Union.' What a prospect. Yet this is the voice of the new interventionism, a crusader summoning the West to try its hand at a third world war. In 1990 we thought we had averted that horror. There are times when history must die laughing.

Master race hots up

FOR THOSE looking to take that crucial last step on the career ladder, the festive season could be an anxious time. No less than four Cambridge colleges — Clare, Selwyn, Corpus Christi and Peterhouse — are currently looking for masters while a fifth, Wolfson, still needs a president to replace Professor David Williams.

Such posts are among the most sought-after in what is still loosely termed academia, not least because they bring with them tenancy of a handsome master's lodge and invitations to the best tables in town. With five up for grabs at once, talk in the university is of little else.

Strong favourite for one of the posts is John Tusa, the retiring head of the BBC World Service. Tusa, who studied history at Trinity College, Cambridge, is well connected in the arts and political world, and is being closely linked to the Wolfson job, along with Lord Wilson, the former governor of Hong Kong.

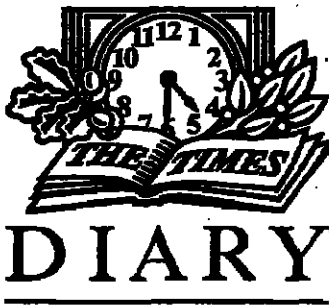
Perhaps inevitably, much speculation is focused on Germaine Greer, author of *The Female Eunuch* and *The Change*, who was narrowly beaten in January in her

attempt to become Master of Sidney Sussex College. But Greer, who lectures part-time at Newnham, will not have endeared herself to the Cambridge establishment with her response to defeat. "I am relieved — who would want to be mistress of the dullest college in Cambridge?"

Kenneth Baker, in the political wilderness since he left the cabinet, is a possible contender. Another former cabinet minister, Lord St John of Fawley, is Master of Emmanuel.

Peterhouse, one of the most colourful of all Cambridge colleges and the model for Tom Sharpe's *Porterhouse Blue*, is having most difficulty. The college is a former Thatcherite stronghold, but with the balance of power shifting, a suitable candidate is yet to emerge. With a Thatcherite cabal determined to win the day, Sir Alan Walters, Baroness Thatcher's former economic adviser, Professor Patrick Minford, the monetarist economist, and Roger Scruton, the former Professor of Aesthetics at Birkbeck College, have emerged as likely contenders.

One Peterhouse grandee, ap-



palled at the prospect of such headline candidates, says: "The danger is that someone like Alan Walters will get the post because dons will have become tired of discussing the candidates."

Scruton, a former research fellow of Peterhouse, was flattered at the prospect. "Anyone would be interested. But I will not be offered the post. I am too anti-establishment. Alan Walters has a handle to his name and he could give the college an 'in' with the powers that be. But, if *Porterhouse Blue* is any guide, Paul Swann, the chief porter at Peterhouse, is your man.

Suet success

WITH only one full shopping day left until the 25th, the final shots are being fired in the exclusive war

of the Christmas pudding. For the past five years, makers of the more up-market suet creations have targeted their market through the quality press, radio and television. This Christmas, as last, the outright victor is Anton Mosimann, whose £8.99 version has sold more than 25,000 and has proved so popular that his aides reportedly had to make an extra batch of 1,500 last week to satisfy demand.

Despite the quantity of that sale, however, Christmas gourmets suggest that the pudding made by Joyce Molyneux from The Carved Angel, the renowned seaside eatery in Dartmouth, is that bit better. Certainly Sally Clarke, the Kensington restaurateur, has taken her pudding this year, as has Sonny's restaurant in Barnes and the David Mellor kitchen shops. The £9.95 pudding has sold a mere 1,000 in London but Molyneux remains hopeful for the battles ahead. "I wonder whether Mosimann's recipe is still the same, or whether it has less suet?" she asks. She is right, it does, says Mosimann insiders. But Molyneux is not convinced it's a cut for the better. "I think people are perhaps willing to go for very high cholesterol once a year." Cholesterol apart, Fortnum and Mason this

Alice and the palace

ONE OF Britain's best-paid nonagenarians celebrates her birthday on Christmas day. Princess Alice, who received £87,000 from the Civil List this year, will be 91. The princess, who wrote her memoirs ten years ago, performed about 50 official functions this year, which means she averages about £1,740 an appearance. Princess Alice, who describes herself as "a kind of pre-betnik", was part of the Happy Valley set in Kenya before marrying Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, third son of King George V. The third daughter of the 7th Duke of Buccleuch, Princess Alice was given sound advice by her father, who told her to learn how to make lamp shades in case she fell on hard times in later life. The advice may yet come in useful. She is one member of the royal family who is likely to find herself eradicated from the newly pared Civil List.

year wins the price stakes with its 4lb pudding, a mere £16.95.

Street wise

THE RECESSION is now so bad that the prospect of bank managers homeless and on the streets is a real one. Tony Rogers, for instance, the chief executive of Standard Chartered's Malaysian business, is facing the prospect for the second time in three years.

Rogers's problem, however, is

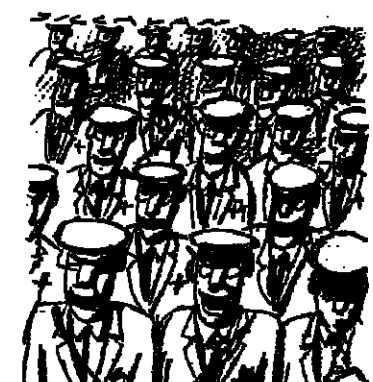
that his accommodation is too palatial. Having discovered that its house and compound in Kuala Lumpur is now in the most desirable suburb of the fast-growing city, Standard has cashed in and sold the house for £20 million.

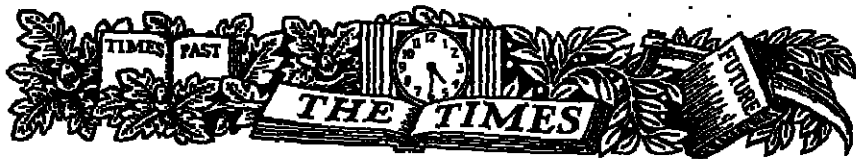
Fortunately, Rogers is no stranger to the streets. In 1989, as Standard's manager in Thailand, he was similarly evicted from his house in Bangkok when the bank discovered, to its delight, that the site was worth £50 million. Rogers

is now seeking alternative accommodation and Standard is hoping he will make it a hat trick.

There is barely an area of British life which is unaffected by the recession it seems, including traditional Christmas pantomime. The Hull Truck Theatre Company is employing a novel marketing technique for its run of *Gargling with Jelly* by Brian Patten.

The theatre company has recruited 240 local milkmen to deliver leaflets to local families along with their daily pintas. Asked whether the technique had worked, a spokeswoman for the theatre company said: "We've had a lot of milkmen in."





IN HARNESS

The EC's two ambassadors will be too busy to squabble

Maastricht has been an unnecessary and damaging distraction for the European Community. The past two years have been taken up with minute introspection, while outside the Community momentous events were taking place. The Gatt round has to be resolved, the former communist countries of Europe need to be brought into the fold of Western European trade and, most urgently, the ethnic tension in ex-Yugoslavia must somehow be contained.

Thus the most important appointments Jacques Delors made yesterday in his reshuffle of portfolios in the European Commission were to ask two men to share the post of external affairs. Will Sir Leon Brittan and Hans van den Broek, who will represent the EC in its relations with the outside world, be able to work as a team? The worry is that the two will bicker while these vital problems remain unresolved.

Trade negotiations are among the Commission's broadest powers: its officials bargain on behalf of the 12 member governments, whose ministers are confined only to setting a framework and then approving or refusing the final result. Splitting the Commission's top external affairs job into two parts and then sharing it between two of the largest and hungriest beasts of the Brussels jungle, Mr van den Broek and Sir Leon, might seem to presage dangerous internal divisions.

Yet they may not materialise. The task of representing the Community outside its own borders is now so huge that spreading it between more than one commissioner was inevitable. The possibilities of infighting between Mr van den Broek and Sir Leon cannot be ruled out.

But both men are shrewd and experienced enough to know that if they co-operate, they will be the most influential pair of commissioners after the president himself and a formidable counterweight to the power that

M Delors has managed to build up in the Community's labyrinthine system.

Sir Leon can concentrate on two challenges. The Gatt talks require political skill inside the Commission and negotiating skill in Geneva. Sir Leon will also be the steward of around £2 billion of aid each year to eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. He has to make sense of an EC aid and trade policy which gives with one hand and takes away with the other: money is pumped into renaissance economies which find their exports blocked at the Community's frontiers. Britain's senior commissioner has his opportunity to show that the EC intends to end the mean-minded introversion which it has shown to the other half of Europe.

Mr van den Broek, above all, is an unabashed Atlanticist who once thought of running for the secretary-generalship of Nato. M Delors has relinquished the sensitive question of developing the EC's "common foreign and security policy" to a man who is one of the least likely in Europe to rip apart the frayed fabric of the alliance between America and Europe. Mr van den Broek, at the Maastricht treaty negotiations, told British ministers to stand up to M Delors' harebrained schemes for setting the EC up as a superpower rival to the US.

Mr van den Broek therefore has a well-defined task that may well run through to the next Commission, which is due to take office in only two years' time. He has to frame the answer to the hard question posed by the daily sequence of ghastly images from the Balkans: what, if anything, can Europe do? Since events have made brutally plain that the EC is incapable of doing anything useful on its own, Mr van den Broek can only solve the dilemma by building bridges with other organisations. Few people are better qualified to wade in the alphabet soup of the CSCE, WEU and Nato and to rescue something useful for the future.

STOP MOTORWAY MAYHEM

Murderous speeding should be a criminal offence

The shocking death toll on the roads and motorways in the past two days has shown that the nation's driving habits are still marred by a stubborn recklessness. As fog and frost set in, police warned motorists to slow down and listen to weather warnings—advice so obvious it should not have to be spelt out. Yet the Automobile Association reported that Monday was its busiest day on record, as more than 7,000 drivers who were stranded or involved in accidents called in for assistance. The grim spectacle of pile-ups involving dozens of vehicles and as many casualties suggested an almost wilful irresponsibility at work.

Quite opposite conclusions can be drawn from the drink-driving statistics released yesterday by the Association of Chief Police Officers. The new figures, broadly similar to last year's, confirm the radical change in public attitudes over the last decade towards a practice that was once regarded as a mere peccadillo. The number of fatal accidents involving drunk drivers has halved since 1982, as the 14-year old official campaign has bitten deep into the public conscience. According to a Gallup poll published earlier this year, more than 80 per cent of people said that government advertising had made an impact upon them.

Yesterday's police statistics are testimony to the power of properly focused public education. In particular, the figures support

the case for the transport department's newest and most graphic advertisement which shows the moribund face of a young girl hit by a drunken driver.

The government must now translate its propaganda coup further afield. Speeding remains a national pastime: the temptations of the open motorway are to middle-class drivers what joy-riding is to the inner-city unemployed. According to a recent Scottish Office survey, more than 50 per cent of motorists still regard speeding as a minor offence—an absurdly relaxed attitude.

John MacGregor, the transport secretary, has already allotted £50 million of the 1993-4 roads package to safety projects. He should ensure that money is set aside for an advertising campaign next year to prevent a repetition of the mayhem on the motorways. In part, the public needs to know what precautions to take when conditions are treacherous. Equally, they must be reminded of the potentially ghastly consequences if they ignore such advice. Shock images may be tasteless, but they are effective.

But there will be no significant change in driving practice until police forces are given the power to make advisory speed limits compulsory. Such restrictions would be triggered by weather conditions and set regionally by chief police officers, who would then be legally responsible for clear sign-posting of the change.

DUTY BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Christmas Past: a series on the unchanging face of the season.
Four: From The Times of December 20, 1935

Now comes the testing time in the great Christmas campaign. The first few days of shopping were enlivening and easy. We were ushered into new-built Palaces of Art and Aladdin's Caves. We were given lectures—and rides, if we wished—on electric railways; exhibitions of model cranes that would lift an umbrella to the ceiling; demonstrations by benumbed model elephants and precocious dolls. Altogether we were entertained at as lively a Christmas party as we may hope to enjoy this season. The spirit in which Christmas shopping should be done was brisk within us.

"Not the little prize Turkey; the big one. ... Go and buy it." Scrooge himself was hardly more impulsive or more generous. Or perhaps, in strict truth, our mood was more like that of PEPYS, as he "stopped and dropped money at five or six places, all the while because it was Christmas." These high standards were our guides, and until now there has been no difficulty in playing up to them.

Bare patches, however, are beginning to appear on the stalls that seemed inexhaustible. There have been disappointments for newcomers. Santa Claus's sack is finite after all. The lumbering elephant has gone and cannot be replaced. The shelves of slippers begin to show long gaps, like the rows of shoes along an hotel corridor out of the season. Only the more splendid of the socks remain on many counters. The task of hanging presents on the branches of the family tree becomes more and more formidable. Forgotten boughs are suddenly remembered, calling for fresh forays, and the mood is in danger of becoming almost as that of the captives hanging their harps on strange willows.

It seems odd that men, who have always

sung the most loudly on the glories of Christmas—led by PEPYS, "with a heart full of true joy"—should now leave the privilege of shopping mainly to their wives and daughters. In the old days the Christmas season was never thought to have begun until the master of the household had come home laden with the pick of the market. He may now plead that he has other work to do, and that modern shopping demands a technique that only practice can make perfect. Having refused to meddle with it for eleven months of the year, what kind of a mess would he not make by plunging in alone at the height of the campaign? Shopping to man is a thing apart. 'Tis woman's—perhaps not whole existence—but at least a sufficiently great part of it to give any shopping expedition a delight as of the chase. A zeal which can inspire.

Six consecutive weeks without stopping in one continuous round of shopping is likely to be spurred only to greater efforts at the challenge of the piled counters before Christmas. Therefore the men's reluctance to visit more than the toy stalls has hitherto been wise. But now perhaps comes their opportunity for bolder ventures. Many names still remain to be crossed off the list of those who shall receive presents. The shops have announced that they will stay open until late in the evening. Shock tactics are required and quick decisions. It is said that men are difficult to choose for. Let them prove that they can at least choose for others, while the advance guard—who have stormed the defences and carried off much of the spoils—take a well-earned rest. To the faint heart who hesitates DICKENS once more gives encouragement: "It's impossible to carry that to Camden Town. Take a cab."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Editors on the freedom of the press

From the Chairman of the Association of British Editors

Sir, Lord Marsh (letter, December 21) is wrong and, given the position he once held as chairman of the Newspaper Publishers' Association, dangerously wrong. To suggest, as he does, that those who work for the media do so for no other purpose than to make money for the owners ignores what is in fact their more significant job: which is to provide a free flow of information on every topic that is important or of interest to their readers, viewers or listeners.

On this depends the effective operation of a democratic society, and attempts to put further restraints on freedom of information must be as resolutely opposed now as they have been in the past.

Clive Soley's Bill, for all its apparent good intent, would apply a very tight tourniquet on the flow of news and information by putting much of its control in the hands of a government-appointed body. Armed by Parliament with legal powers, it would in effect be in a position to decide what newspapers should or should not publish, and is thus the thin end of a large wedge of censorship, of which the next logical step would be the licensing of approved publications and the banning of the others.

At the same time we in the media must accept that Mr Soley is responding to parliamentary concern at some excessive behaviour by some of us. The problem with the proposed solution, and with other ideas such as the introduction of a privacy law, is that they are heavy-handed and likely to tip the balance towards more secrecy and away from the right to know.

When the size of the media is taken into account, and the amount of reporting that is done from hour to hour and day to day, the incidence of bad conduct is very small. The number of complaints has declined since the introduction of a code of practice, which sets out the professional and ethical standards journalists are required to follow when going about their business, and the creation of the Press Complaints Commission, whose task is to monitor our behaviour.

Of course there have been transgressions, and no one is defending them. But the code—the first the press has ever had—and the commission are still in their infancy. We should not be put in chains before being given time to make them work, nor should journalists be stopped from doing what they are paid to do, which is to report as accurately as possible on what's going on.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES BISHOP (Chairman,
Association of British Editors),
20 Upper Ground, SE1.

From the Editor of the Hampstead & Highgate Express

Sir, Lord Marsh takes a dangerously totalitarian and tainted view of

democracy, accepting censorship as inherent. Duty means performing a task for moral or legal reasons; it makes the case for journalists to pursue the truth in all its guises, though not necessarily by any means.

On that score, some journalists, myself included, seek reforms in the law of trespass and controls on electronically gathered information, though it is hard to do the latter when obscene material, accepted to be illegal in British law, can be beamed in by satellite.

Parliament's duty is to be a check on the executive and to reveal its shortcomings, something it is not very good at as our party system produces too many ineffectual MPs. The press's duty reflects and enhances that, exposing the blatant lies and corrosive secrecy we have witnessed, for example, in recent months.

What Lord Marsh highlights is the need for a written constitution with accepted rights for all, including freedom of the press and freedom of expression, which too often get confused.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD ISAACMAN, Editor,
Hampstead & Highgate Express,
Manborough House,
179-189 Finchley Road, NW3.

From the Editor of the Evening Standard

Sir, Lord Marsh says "the only duty journalists have is 'to provide the owners with an acceptable return on their investment'." There are those who argue that the only reason anyone wishes to be a member of Parliament is because they wish to pick up a fat salary cheque without the need for real work.

There are those who argue that members of any Cabinet are obligated, not to the public, but to the overwhelming sense of their own self-importance. Fortunately some of us refuse to believe it.

Of course members of Parliament from time to time need to adjust their opinions for the good of the party. Of course newspapermen are sometimes obliged to bear in mind circulation. Despite this, what continues to amaze me is both how many politicians remain honest to the cause which first brought them into Parliament and how many journalists, despite temptations to the contrary, continue to crusade on the public's behalf.

Those newspapermen whom Lord Marsh describes as being interested only in providing "an acceptable return" on their proprietors' investments will ultimately fail, as will their newspapers.

As in politics, so in journalism—the cynic will be found out in the end. The public is simply too sensible to have it any other way.

Yours faithfully,
STEWART STEVEN,
Editor, Evening Standard,
Northcliffe House,
2 Derry Street, Kensington, W8.

Industrial parallels

From Mr Roland Castro

Sir, There are many parallels between the plight of our miners and that of French farmers. Maybe we should be more sympathetic towards France's predicament.

Yours faithfully,
ROLAND CASTRO,
3 Chester Close, Chester Street, SW1.

Legal aid offer

From the President of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers

Sir, The "snub" delivered by the Lord Chancellor to the offer by the Bar Council and the Law Society to accept a freeze in legal-aid pay rates (report, December 18) again raises fears that the proposed cuts have a social as well as a financial motivation.

I hope that these fears are not justified. The best way of proving that would be for the government to examine seriously suggestions for cost saving, such as that put forward by the Bar Council and the Law Society with a view to making savings or finding "new" money for legal aid.

My association over a year ago pointed out that in personal injury cases, while most defendants are corporate bodies who could recoup the VAT paid on legal services and claim tax allowances, plaintiffs could not.

We suggested that this matter should be examined to see whether, by removing that right and so creating equality between the parties, additional funds could be made available for legal aid. As far as I

Mayhew on Ireland

From Mr David McCarthy Brown

Sir, Your Ireland correspondent informs us (report, December 17) that on December 16 the Northern Ireland secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, described the aspiration towards the Irish unification as being no less legitimate than unionism.

Other than within the framework of a re-united British Isles, it is hard to see how this can be so.

Arguably, even in the absence of any recourse to actual violence, those who seek to subvert some one million of Her Majesty's loyal subjects from their allegiance within the realm, and

Serbs and the continuing violence

From Mr J. D. Porter

Sir, Conor Cruise O'Brien ("Blundering into Bosnia", December 15) refers to "rolling back the Serbs out of Bosnia". A little later he says that if "the Serbs were driven out of Bosnia the invading forces... would have to remain in Bosnia indefinitely, to ensure that the Serbs did not come back".

My understanding is that the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina is split roughly one third Serb, one third Muslim and one third Croatian. As to territory, the Serbs have historically always occupied considerably more than one third of the country by reason of the fact that they are largely agrarian and the Muslims are the town and city dwellers.

The native Bosnian-Serbs have as much right as the other two groups to remain in their own country. What needs to be stopped is the persistent aggression by any of the groups and the supply of arms to them by outside forces.

Yours sincerely,
J. D. PORTER,
Flat 11, Grandcourt,
King Edward's Parade,
Eastbourne, East Sussex,
December 18.

From Mr Yugo Kovach

Sir, You state that "the Serbs must be stopped" (leading article, "Time to act", December 17). Yet Lord Owen, a most unlikely Serbophile, acknowledges their readiness to negotiate. The Bosnian Serbs, in fact, have wanted to do so for months, ever since they had established a defensible perimeter around their ethnic areas. In contrast, the Muslim Slav-dominated presidency wants international intervention; hence it has not been willing to negotiate and has had no interest in upholding ceasefires.

You refer to "the cynical deceit of the Belgrade government and their placemen in Bosnia". The truth is that the democratic election which legitimised Izetbegovic's leadership of the Bosnian Muslims also legitimised Karadzic's leadership of Bosnia's Serbs.

As for deceit, it is a matter of record that the Muslim Slav-dominated presidency reneged, needless to say only after international recognition had been granted, on the agreement reached with the Bosnian Serbs and Croats under EC chairmanship to ethnically divide Bosnia. Note that the Bosnian Serbs resorted to arms only after it had become apparent that the international community was condoning the presidency's deceitful behaviour.

You worry that the Serb use of helicopters (including casualty evac-

ation?) will undermine the authority of the UN. On the contrary, the real threat to the UN is the international community's plan to divide Yugoslavia into six statelets, along Tito's federal administrative lines. It will patently not work.

What is emerging is a Bosnia which will comprise a three-sided loose confederation or, even worse, be subject to a UN mandate similar to the British one in Palestine: an ethnically based Croatia, incorporating an embittered autonomous Serb Krajina; a Macedonia federalised into Macedonian Slav and Albanian units; and a Montenegro with three constituent nations.

As for Serbia proper, heaven knows what kind of constitutional maze would satisfy the international community. Authority based on the concept of infallibility is indeed worrisome.

Yours faithfully,
YUGO KOVACH,
38 Lebanon Park,
Twickenham, Middlesex,
December 17.

From Mr T. A. Payne

Sir, As the husband of a Bosnian Serb, and as a former member of the British-Yugoslav Society, my despair at reading Richard Beeston's article, "Rape and revenge" (December 17), on sexual abuse by Serbs against Muslim women is deepened by the fact that I am generally sympathetic to the Serbian cause. My support rests upon the fact that only moderate Serbs still uphold the ideal of a Yugoslavia that is far more homogeneous than our press and political establishments would have us believe.

Those who commit such atrocities, whether they are Serbs, Croats or Muslims, not only rape women and children, but also defile the concept of Yugoslavia—the only real guarantee of peace and freedom in the Balkans.

Yours faithfully,
TERRY PAYNE,
5 Kendal Court,
Penge, SE20.

From Mr Angus Duncan

Sir, What will the prime minister achieve by going to Bosnia (leading article, December 22)? A great photo-opportunity for him but for the soldiers only hindrance in carrying out their duties. VIPs think that they boost morale when visiting troops but my experience when in the army was that more could be done with time off and good food and drink.

Yours faithfully,
ANGUS DUNCAN,
53 Dagnam Road, Balham, SW12,
December 22.

Drinkers who smoke

From Mr F. P. Taylor

Sir, Your report (December 17) from the British Psychological Society meeting that three glasses of wine or one and a half pints of beer a day help to ward off the common cold is misleading. Dr Andrew Smith's research, at the University of Wales clearly shows this improved resistance is confined to non-smokers. Those who smoke show no benefit from a modicum of alcohol.

Yours faithfully,
F. P. TAYLOR,
7 Kingsway, Frodsham, Cheshire,
December 17.

know, no consideration has been given to this suggestion. It is also particularly important to look at the overall funding facts with regard to legally aided personal injury work.

Something like 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the Legal Aid Board's outlay is recovered as a result of the successful conclusion of cases. If fewer cases are brought, as they inevitably will be under the new eligibility rules, the Treasury will lose money because of the new "clawback" provisions under which the DSS recovers its outlay on benefits in cases where compensation is recovered.

A significant part of the increase in legal aid is attributable to increases in VAT and court costs. Ironically, county court fees were put up, some by as much as three times, on the very day that the cuts were announced.

Is it not time that a proper accounting took place instead of this blind response to financial pressures, resulting in the poorest and weakest being deprived of their rights?

Yours faithfully,
J. MELVILLE WILLIAMS
(President, Association of Personal Injury Lawyers),
15 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, WC2.

Season's greetings

From Mrs J. Williams

Sir, In former years Christmas cards could be posted at a cheaper rate if the flaps of envelopes were tucked in, rather than sealed. Now, paying the full rate, if we reverted to this sensible habit the envelopes could be re-used and trees saved.

Yours faithfully,
JOYCE WILLIAMS,
67 Buttermere Court,
Boundary Road, NW8,
December 11.

From Mrs Annabel Geddes

Sir, Being rather short-sighted, I inadvertently posted a number of letters the other day with 1p stamps on them. I had mistaken them for first-class stamps and was in a hurry. They all arrived at their destinations next day, and no extra postage was charged.

Yours faithfully,
ANNABEL GEDDES,
59e Harcourt Terrace, SW10,
December 14.

From Mr John Cutress

Sir, Mrs Tingey's criticism of the Central Office of Information's Spanish (letter, December 23) is not entirely justified. At my Spanish evening classes, where I am twice as old as any other student, my Spanish teacher (who is Spanish) assured me that I was correct in saying to her "Felices Pascuas" as it means Easter and Christmas plus the Feast of the Kings (Epiphany) and can best be translated as "Season's Greetings".

Yours sincerely,
JOHN CUTRESS,
69 The Drove,
Hove, East Sussex,
December 22.

Mummy's molars

From Dr H. G. Muller

Sir, You report (December 21) the X-ray examination of an Egyptian mummy, Jeni, and claim that the fact that her teeth were not ground down by millstone grit is evidence of her youth. Wooden pestle and mortar mills were common in ancient Egypt.

Yours faithfully,
H. G. MULLER,
10 Tredgold Crescent, Bramhope,
Leeds, West Yorkshire.

Business letters, page 19

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 22: The Duke of York this morning visited RMS St Helena at Queen Alexandra Dock, Cardiff Docks, Cardiff, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for South Glamorgan (Captain Norman Lloyd-Edwards).
Captain Neil Blair RN was in attendance.
CLARENCE HOUSE
December 22: The Lady An

gela Oswald has succeeded Dame Frances Campbell-Preston as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 22: The Prince of Wales this evening attended a Dinner with Mr and Mrs Vadár Havel in Prague.
Mr Peter Westmacott was in attendance.

Birthdays today

The Emperor of Japan celebrates his birthday today.
Mr Michele Alboreto, racing driver, 36; the Earl of Balfour, 67; Lord Bancroft, 70; Sir Norman Biggs, banker, 85; Lord Blake, 76; Vice-Admiral Sir Stephen Cardell, 90; Professor Sir Theo Crawford, pathologist, 81; Mr Peter Davis, chairman and chief executive, Reed International, 51; Mr Maurice Denham, actor, 83; Sir Colin Fielding, civil servant, 66; Mr Yousuf Karsh, photographer, 84; Mr Graham Kelly, chief executive, Football Association, 47; Professor Peter Lachmann, president, Royal College of Pathologists, 61; Mr Christopher Lawrence, silver-smith, 56; Brigadier Sir Geoffrey Macnab, 93; Miss J.M. Quennell, former MP, 69; Mr Ashley Kears, former chairman, Boscawen & Hawkes, 74; Herr Helmut Schmidt, former chancellor, Federal Republic of Germany, 74; Mr Christopher Turner, former headmaster, Stowe School, 63; Mr R.S. Urwin, publisher, 67; the Marquess of Winchester, 51.

Reception

A reception in memory of Carl Heinz Goldman will be held at the Royal College of Physicians in London, on Tuesday, 2 February 1993. Further details from Berthe Goldman or a member of the family.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Martin Opitz, poet, Burzau, Silesia, 1597; James Gibbs, architect, Aberdeen, 1682; Sir Richard Arkwright, inventor, Preston, 1732; Sir Martin Archer Shee, painter, Dublin, 1770; Jean François Champollion, Egyptologist, Figeac, France, 1790; Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), Sharon, Vermont, 1805; Samuel Smiles, author of *Self Help*, Haddington, Lothian, 1812; Vladimir Ivanovich Nemirovich-Danchenko, theatre director, novelist and playwright, Ouzergie, Georgia, 1858; Sir Hugh Allen, musician, Reading, 1869; J. Arthur Rank, 1st Baron Rank, industrialist and film magnate, Hull, 1888.

DEATHS: Michael Drayton, poet, 1631; John Cotter, Puritan clergyman (the Patriarch of New England), Boston, 1652; Thomas Robert Malthus, economist, Bath, 1834; Hugh Miller, geologist, committed suicide, 1856; Alexandre Gustave Eiffel, builder of the tower bearing his name, Paris, 1923; Anthony Herman Folker, aircraft pioneer, New York, 1939; Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, 1st Earl of Halifax, statesman, Viscount of India 1926-31, Garroway, Yorkshire, 1959.

HMS Bounty, commanded by William Bligh, set sail for the South Seas, 1787.
Joseph Hansom patented a type of cab, 1834.

Latest wills

Admiral Sir David John Halifax, of Englefield, Berkshire, Constable and Governor of Windsor Castle, and Chief of Staff to Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, left estate valued at £195,944 net.
Mr Charles Austen Impey, of Blanford, Dorset, a housemaster at Eton 1965-80 and General List Secretary there, left estate valued at £480,890 net. He left the portrait of his grandfather Edward Impey, presently at Walpole House, Eton, to Eton College, and one case of wine from his collection to the Eton College Wine Society.
Other estates include (net, before tax paid):
Mrs Violet Mary Briggs, of Cornhill on Tweed, Northumberland, £555,299.
Mrs Alice Monica Beckingham, of North Walsham, £749,837.
Mr John Richard Burgess, of Copland, of Skillingthorpe, Lincs, £697,477.

Mr Leslie Donald Berry, of Ashby de la Zouch, Leics £1,304,110.
Mr Harold Henry Bird, of Melksham, Wilt, £616,858.
Mr Kenneth Burrell, of Chelmsford, Essex, £766,281.
Vida John Clarke, of Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands £598,897.
Mr Frank James Ely, of Mayfield, East Sussex, £525,244.
Mrs Valerie Mary Folestad, of Whitefield, Greater Manchester £616,994.
Mr Terence Desmond Hanson, of Kington, Leics, £571,303.
Mr Gordon Revell Hamner, of Bognor Regis, West Sussex £974,781.
Mr Harman Stephenson Healy, of Southampton Row, London WC1, £587,095.
Mr Bruce Eric Karter, of Kingston upon Thames, south-west London, £769,837.
Mrs Irene Mad Moore, of Old Heathfield, East Sussex £1,722,894.



Bright future: Mark Sparrow, supervisor of the Temperate House at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, with a rare yellow variant of the bird-of-paradise flower, *Strelitzia reginae*, which has bloomed for the first time outside South Africa. In its normal form the *strelitzia* is a bright orange and blue (Michael Hornsby writes). Three specimens of the variant, named *Kirstenbosch Gold*, were brought to Britain from South Africa in October last year and planted in the Temperate House this spring. They flowered last week, mid-summer in the southern hemisphere.
Mr Sparrow, whose Temperate House contains

about 2,000 plant species, said: "The plants are about 2ft tall now and will eventually reach 4ft or more. We expect them to stay in flower for two or three weeks."

Similar rare yellow forms of *Strelitzia reginae* crop up from time to time naturally in botanic gardens. The last time one was seen at Kew was in 1914. That plant, also a gift from South Africa, died and Kew had been unable to obtain a replacement until last year.

The new variant takes its name from the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in Cape Town. It is the product of a 10-year breeding

programme during which botanists finally achieved a plant with rich golden flowers. *Strelitzia reginae*, also known as the crane flower because the petals look like the crest on a bird's head, is native only to the southern and eastern parts of Cape Province and northern Natal in South Africa, where it grows wild on river banks and in scrub clearings along the coast. The plant was first introduced to Britain in 1773 by Sir Joseph Banks, then unofficial director of the Royal Gardens at Kew (their name at the time). He named the exotic-looking plant in honour of Queen Charlotte, wife of George III and Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in Prussia.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.R.M. Blyth and Miss B.N. Hewitt

The engagement is announced between the second son of Mr Douglas Blyth, CMG, of Crownland Hall, Walsham-le-Wilts, Wiltshire, and the late Dr John Harding, and Madeleine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Tony Williams, of Kingston Hill, Surrey.

Mr A.H. Forsyth and Miss S.A. Wallis

The engagement is announced between the son of Mr and Mrs Colin Forsyth, of Uppingham, Rutland, and Sophie, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Andrew Wallis of Colingham, Nottinghamshire.

Mr T.R.D. Gee and Miss A.K.H. Ng

The engagement is announced between Timothy Edward Daniel, younger son of Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Gee, of Coton, Northamptonshire, and Anita Kung Heung, daughter of Mrs King Shun Lee and the late Mr Lam Sing Ng, of Hong Kong.

Squadron Leader A.J. Gibbons and Miss N.J. van der Walt

The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Mr and Mrs W.A. Gibbons, of Maidstone, Kent, and Nicole, daughter of Mr and Mrs N.S.T. van der Walt, of Bloemfontein, South Africa.

Mr P.J. Harding and Miss M.G. Williams

The engagement is announced between Peter, younger son of Mrs Diana Harding, of Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, and the late Dr John Harding, and Madeleine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Tony Williams, of Kingston Hill, Surrey.

Dr D.C. Hargreaves and Miss K.S. Nicholson

The engagement is announced between the son of Mr and Mrs C.P. Hargreaves, of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, and Kathryn, second daughter of the Rev Dr E.W. and Mrs Nicholson, of Oriel College, Oxford.

Mr J.J. Haydn-Williams and Miss R.L. Hume

The engagement is announced between Jonathan, elder son of Dr and Mrs John Haydn-Williams, of Leek, Staffordshire, and Penelope, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Hume, of Kuala Lumpur, and Cromford, Derbyshire.

Mr R.J. Irving and Miss P. Schjett

The engagement is announced between Robert James, son of the late John Anthony Irving and of Mrs Judith Pritchard, and stepson of Mrs Judith Pritchard, of Abbeots Wood, Hampshire, and Penelope, daughter of Mr and Mrs Elm Schjett, of Hjørring, Denmark.

Mr A. Jamal and Miss D.A. Gordon

The engagement is announced between the son of Mr A.E. Jamal, of Cyprus, and the Duchess of Newcastle, and the late Dr John Harding, and Madeleine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Tony Williams, of Kingston Hill, Surrey.

Mr R.A. Urquhart and Miss A.P. Sequeira

The engagement is announced between Bruce, son of Mr and Mrs George Urquhart, of Hawke, New Zealand, and Anna, eldest daughter of Colonel Sir Peter and Lady Redwood, of Corton, Wiltshire.

Mr G.W. Williams and Miss C.K. Collett

The engagement is announced between Guy, son of Colonel and Mrs David Williams, of Wiltshire, Kent, and Clare, daughter of Mr and Mrs Tony Collett, of Fitcham, Surrey.

Mr P.M. Thomson and Miss A.K. Redwood

The engagement is announced between the son of Mr P.M. Thomson, of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and eldest son of Brigadier and Mrs Michael Thomson, of Trouville, France, and Anna, eldest daughter of Colonel Sir Peter and Lady Redwood, of Corton, Wiltshire.

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Mr E.W. Johnston and Miss S.R. Jacobs

The marriage took place on Saturday, December 19, at St. Leary's (Whitchurch). Little Stannum, between Edward Johnston and Susan Jacobs.

University news

Oxford University prizes

The following have been awarded: Geoffrey Rhoades Commemorative Bursary 1992: Zofia Szabo, Pembroke College. Gibbs Prize in Geography 1992: Felicity Callard, Hertford College. Book Prizes: Benjamin Page, Pembroke College and Timothy Paul Simmonds, Jesus College.

Gibbs Prize in Modern History 1992: Book Prizes: Rachel Lampard, Pembroke College and Richard Lofthouse, Lady Margaret Hall.

Gibbs Prize in Law 1992: Patricia Ferguson, Hertford College. *Prize access:* Louise Davies, St John's College.

Book prizes: Andrew Dickinson, St Edmund Hall; Umesh Kumar, Balliol College and Jonathan Sutcliffe, Worcester College.

Gibbs Special prize in Politics 1992: Sebastian Frederick Lawson, Balliol College. *Prize access:* Steven Warner, St Anne's College. Book Prize: Lucy White, St John's College.

Bath

The university court, at its annual general meeting on December 21, accepted the nomination of Sir Denis Hayden, chairman of ICI, as Chancellor. Sir Denis is the third chancellor of Bath university and succeeds Lord Kesteven of Whitchurch who died in July.

Bishop of Manchester appointed

By Ruth Gladhill
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE new Bishop of Manchester will be the Right Rev Christopher Mayfield, at present Bishop of Wolverhampton.
Bishop Mayfield, aged 57, who has degrees in engineering and social policy, is from the evangelical wing of the Church of England. He will succeed the Right Rev Stanley Booth-Clibborn, who retired last month, after more than 15 years in office.

The new bishop said yesterday that the invitation to move to Manchester "came as a complete surprise. He took a week to accept. Bishops don't expect to be called to other posts once they have got into one they are enjoying," he said.

At Wolverhampton, Bishop Mayfield is a suffragan in the Lichfield diocese. He will join the Manchester diocese next Easter. It has a population of two million and covers 415 square miles through most of Greater Manchester and an area of southern Lancashire. He will head nearly 400 stipendiary clergy.

The diocese is poor in terms of per capita wealth of church members. Bishop Booth-Clibborn often criticised government policies, although he was not antagonistic or aggressive. He is a leading supporter of women priests.

Bishop Mayfield, who is married with three children, said he also supported women priests, although he was conscious of the significant groups who oppose the recent decision in favour of the general synod.

Church news

The Rev Canon Geoffrey Turner, Rector, St Andrew, Bebbington and Rural Dean of Wirral North, diocese Chester, is to be Archdeacon of Chester.

Appointments
The Rev Mark Alken, Rector, Sproughton & Beeston (Wirral) to be Chaplain, Sherborne Boys School (Dorset).

The Rev Michael Beckett, Curate, Cambridge, St Barnabas to be Priest-in-charge, Cambridge St Paul (Cambs). The Rev Christopher Boyce, Assistant Curate (NSM), All Saints, Eastbourne (Sussex) to be Assistant Curate, St Mary, Upton (Cheshire).

The Rev Susan Brooks, Deacon, Cusworth to be Deacon-in-charge, St Michael's and St Helen's, in the Abbeyside and Family Ties Team Parish (West Yorkshire).

The Rev Mary Carter, part-time Parish Deacon, Benson Team Ministry, Oxfordshire to be Vicar, Salisbury and Wells Theological College (Dorset) to be Vicar-Principal, SMDS Salisbury and Wells Theological College (Salisbury).

The Rev David Fountain (brother Malcolm SSPX), non-stipendiary minister, Handsword St Michael (Birmingham) to be brother, Hillfield Priory (Salisbury).

The Rev Michael Raman, Assistant Curate, Christ Church, Wharfedale to be Vicar, St John, Bugsworth (Cheshire).

The Rev Richard Gilling, Rector, the Priory Team Parish and Rural Dean of Bournemouth to be also an Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral (Cheshire). The Rev Roger Gilling, Curate, Mark, Kensington to be Curate, St Barnabas, Dulwich (Southwark).

The Rev Michael Kesteven of Whitchurch, St Paul's, West Ealing to be Team Rector, Wokingham (London).

TEL: 071 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

FAX: 071 481 9313

DEATHS

BACK - Eric Hatfield VRD, 69, died 21st December, 1992, at 21st Avenue, London. Buried at 21st Avenue, London. Buried at 21st Avenue, London.

BIRTHS

CORRIGAN - On December 21st, a daughter, Rose, to Mr and Mrs. Buried at 21st Avenue, London.

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DEATHS

BACK - Eric Hatfield VRD, 69, died 21st December, 1992, at 21st Avenue, London. Buried at 21st Avenue, London.

BIRTHS

CORRIGAN - On December 21st, a daughter, Rose, to Mr and Mrs. Buried at 21st Avenue, London.

DE SILVA - On December 17th, a daughter, Paul, to Mr and Mrs. Buried at 21st Avenue, London.

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NEWS

US may use missiles against Serbs

■ America is prepared to launch cruise missile attacks on Serbian airfields to enforce the air exclusion zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Pentagon disclosed, as the Western allies put the finishing touches to a draft UN resolution aimed at curbing Serb aggression in the former Yugoslav republic.

The draft authorising military action could be ready today, and John Major told troops during a surprise visit to Bosnia yesterday that it would be put to the security council within days. **Pages 1,6,12,13**

Yeltsin cancels Christmas summit

Amid uncertainty over the future of his economic reforms, President Yeltsin withdrew from the Commonwealth of Independent States summit scheduled for Minsk on Christmas day. **Page 1,7**

Passengers killed

British workers are feared to be among the 158 passengers who died when a Libyan Boeing 727 crashed on an internal flight from Benghazi to Tripoli. **Page 1**

Staying away

The Princess of Wales is not expected at Sandringham for Christmas. She is believed to be going to stay with her brother, Earl Spencer, at Althorp House in Northamptonshire. **Page 1**

Double quit

A hospital trust manager who has been sacked for sexual harassment resigned from two other hospitals while under investigation for alleged misdemeanours. However, he also received several glowing references. **Page 5**

Growing force

Israel sent more troops to the border area with Lebanon to stop the 415 Palestinians stranded in no man's land from trying once again to return to Israeli-held territory. Earlier the deported men had to move back towards Lebanon after Israeli forces fired machineguns and mortars at them. **Page 8**

Open secret

Papers that give details of the Macmillan government's secret offer to help America overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba are due to be released today. **Page 4**

Sleeping in

Thousands of homeless people throughout Britain will swap

their damp makeshift beds today for the comfort of a Christmas refuge where they will be fed, given medical treatment where necessary and entertained. But their move into the warm will be brief. **Page 5**

Painful memories

The pilots of the Dutch DC10 which crashed in Portugal this week with the loss of 54 lives have told accident investigators about the last few moments of their ill-fated attempt to land. **Page 9**

Schoolboys die

Two schoolboys in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, died after falling through ice on a frozen pond. Four firemen were being treated in hospital for hypothermia last night after trying to rescue the boys, thought to have been aged 14 and 15. **Page 3**

Action on rape

Rape has become a systematic weapon of war in the Bosnian conflict and the rapists should be put before war crimes tribunals, according to a report by the World Council of Churches. Two of the council's investigators have just returned from a visit to Croatia. **Page 6**

Pit defiance

The government and British Coal are heading for a further clash with miners after unions condemned Michael Heseltine's announcement that coal production would not resume at the ten doomed pits, despite this week's High Court ruling. **Page 2**

Battle of the plastic bimbos

The grown-up world of plastic surgery and breast reshaping at last reached the toy market, when Hasbro Industries, the maker of *Sindy*, agreed that she should have a facelift to make her look less like Barbie. Mattel, the manufacturer of Barbie, had threatened a multi-million dollar legal action because of *Sindy*'s resemblance to its own product. **Page 3**



Long haul: Blizzard, a spaniel, pulling Jacob Johnston, 11, and his cousin Sara, 1, on a sledge in Rapid City, South Dakota

Grounded: British Airways

has been forced to call off its £480 million tie-up with USAir, the American airline after the federal authorities refused to drop their objection to the deal. **Page 17**

Trade gap: Britain's trade figures

plunged £1.2 billion into the red last month, compared with a £950 million deficit in October, as imports continued to flood the high street despite the recession. The figures reawakened fears that the country's manufacturing base is now too weak to meet consumer demands. **Page 17**

Markets: The stockmarket hit

another record high, its third in succession boosted by heavy trading in the futures market. The FTSE 100 index rose 34.3 to close at 2,842.0, bringing the gain in the past three trading days to 101. Brokers are predicting further gains. **Page 17**

Taken back: The International Cricket Council

has bowed to pressure from Pakistan and withdrawn its invitation to Tom Graveney, the former England batsman, to act as the match referee for the Test series and one-day internationals between West Indies and Pakistan. **Page 28**

Loss of credit: The future of Europe's

richest indoor women's tennis tournament, held at Brighton for the past 15 years, has been threatened by Midland Bank's decision to withdraw its sponsorship. **Page 32**

Weighing up: In a world where

thinness is integral to a woman's judgment of her personal success, Sarah Mower finds that the thought of being a slim corpse at one's own untimely funeral is less likely to be perceived as an achievement. **Page 10**

Mass appeal: All too often priests

and clergy have to perform a delicate balancing act, between keeping order in line with the solemnity of the occasion, while not alienating those who might have had one drink too many in the pub beforehand. **Page 11**

Grooves and ruts: Can jazz, which

is essentially live and spontaneous, ever be completely at home in the recording studio? The 75th anniversary of the first ever jazz recordings offers the chance for re-assessment. **Page 23**

Crowned by duets: A new stage

production of *The Prisoner of Zenda* is full of action and romance. **Page 24**

Prize possessions: A vast array of

sporting trophies makes a glittering show at the Victoria and Albert Museum. **Page 25**

Ealing opera? Fifties comedy classic

The Ladykillers has been turned into an opera by Czech composer Ilya Hurnik. **Page 25**

Alarm call: In the eyes of the police

and insurance companies Christmas is also the felonious season. Nigel Buxton on how burglars do not have a merry time at your expense. **Page 26**

Moving house: Fed up of waiting

for that elusive buyer? Home exchanges are looking increasingly attractive. **Page 26**

Selling point: One of life's enigmas,

about which the chattering classes love to chatter, is why doesn't everyone do their shopping as sensibly as they do? Why do so many people buy the pricey manufacturers' brands. **Page 27**



Mary Reveley, who runs her star chaser Cab On Target at Kempton on Boxing day, is a top trainer but she lets her horses do the talking. **Page 29**



Tristan Garel-Jones wanted to step down as a foreign minister last year. John Major persuaded him to stay until Britain's EC presidency was over. **Page 4**



Adeline Patti fell in love with a castle in the wilds of Powys. Now opera fans are being asked to find £1.5 million to repair the diva's home. **Page 5**



Warren Christopher, who served in the last Democratic administration for Jimmy Carter, is expected to be in Bill Clinton's White House team. **Page 8**

TV LISTINGS

Cult comedian Jack Dee stars in a Christmas special with a guest appearance by Tom Jones. *The Jack Dee Show* (C4, 9pm)..... **Page 31**

OPINION

In harness

Both the EC's new ambassadors are shrewd and experienced enough to know that if they co-operate, they will be the most influential pair of commissioners after the president himself and a formidable counterweight to the power M Delors has managed to build up. **Page 13**

Motorway mayhem

There will be no significant change in driving practice until police are given the power to make advisory speed limits compulsory. Such restrictions would be triggered by weather conditions and set regionally by chief police officers. **Page 13**

Duty before Christmas

(from December 20, 1995) It seems odd that men, who have always sung the most loudly on the glories of Christmas should now leave the privilege of shopping mainly to their wives and daughters. **Page 17**

COLUMNS

SIMON JENKINS

So stupid is Western policy towards Serbia that I rather think everybody is on Slobodan Milosevic's side. Politicians should repeat three times a day before breakfast: "Economic Sanctions Never Work". Sanctions against Serbia have done what sanctions always do: entrench those in power, breed nationalism and encourage self-sufficiency. **Page 12**

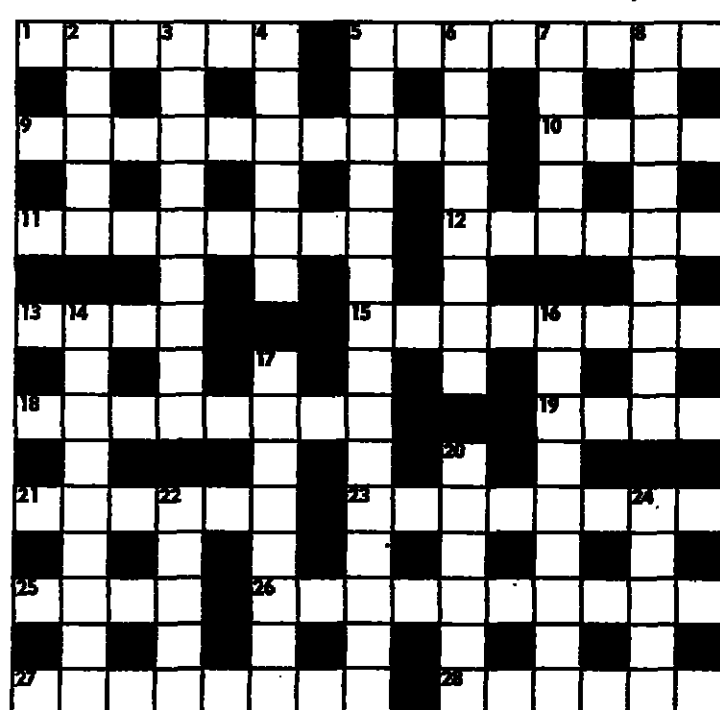
JOHN HABGOOD

Our own monarchy nowadays virtually has to rely on symbolism alone, and the potential danger in this for the future in focusing too much attention on the persons themselves is beginning to be recognised. The main thrust of the symbolism needs to be moved back to where it properly belongs, to the sovereign as the embodiment of the unity and history of the nation under God. **Page 12**

THE PAPERS

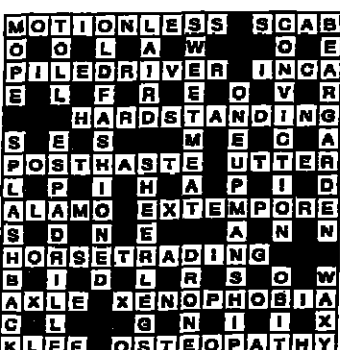
Europe is in trouble. All of the big countries are committed to push the European Community to an unprecedented level of union. A year ago, they expected it to be broadly popular. Since then they have discovered that their voters are conspicuously lukewarm and ambivalent. — Washington Post

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,109



- ACROSS**
- Make fast lap to secure Silver, perhaps (3-3).
 - Properly directed to follow short-term satellite emission (8).
 - Common prison dispute heard in courtyard (10).
 - Flower would be nothing if cut (4).
 - Demand for parking in a small Parisian enclosure (8).
 - Abdicate when son is put in to rule (6).
 - Vehicle rejected by trading centre (4).
 - Justify dropping of opening show (9).
 - English comedian carrying on and making money (8).
 - Frolic in vessel on lake (4).
 - Still an intrusion likely to spoil the reception (6).
 - Manifold, as 6 is of 3, for example (8).
- DOWN**
- Sally holding up Eastern attire (5).
 - Philanderer sailed away with crew (6,3).
 - Priceless instrument soaring to top note (6).
 - Does it help one to get bearings from drawing room? (8,7).
 - Pull rank to cancel order I've put out? (8).
 - Offers to wrap new ties (5).
 - Creature snarling at gorilla (9).
 - Pedigree dog's competition venue (9).
 - Give special attention to sect that's to collect tax (9).
 - Friendly even when caught out (8).
 - Ran off with notes to prepare for flight (6).
 - Host rising to accept thanks from all (5).
 - Constitutional taken in terrible gales (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,108



Concise Crossword, page 32

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0801 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
Kent, Surrey, Sussex	702
Dorset, Here & IOW	703
Devon & Cornwall	704
Wilt, Glouc, Avon, Somerset	705
Berk, Bucks, Oxon	706
Bedfordshire & Essex	707
Northants, Suffolk, Cambs	708
West Mid & Sh. Glam & Gwent	709
Shrop, Hereford & Worcs	710
Central Midlands	711
East Midlands	712
Lincoln & Humbers	713
Derby & Powys	714
Gwynedd & Ceredigion	715
N W England	716
W & S Yorks & Darl.	717
N E England	718
Cumbria & Lake District	719
S W Scotland	720
W Central Scotland	721
Edin & Fife/Lothian & Borders	722
E Central Scotland	723
Grampian & E Highlands	724
N W Scotland	725
Wales	726
Galles, Orkney & Shetland	727
N Ireland	728

Weathercall is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and road-work information, 24 hours a day, dial 0300 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
C London (within N & S Circs.)	732
M25/M26/M27/M28	733
M25/M26/M27/M28	734
M25/M26/M27/M28	735
M25/M26/M27/M28	736
National traffic and roadworks	737
West Country	738
Wales	739
East Anglia	740
North-west England	741
North-east England	742
Scotland	743
Northern Ireland	744
N A Roadwatch is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.	

Met Office forecasts (figures are latest available)

Yesterday: Temp: max 6am to 9pm, 6C (49F); min 9pm to 6am, 1C (34F). Humidity: 60 to 80 per cent. Rain: 24hr to 9pm, nil. Sun: 24hr to 9pm, 6.0hr. Bar: mean sea level, 6pm, 1,033.0 mbars. Wind: 1,000 mbars = 29.5km.

Forecast: Highest day temp: St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, 9C (48F); lowest day temp: Loch Glacach, Highland, 3C (27F). Highest rainfall: Edinburgh, 0.0mm; highest sunshine: Ventnor, Isle of Wight, Weymouth, Dorset; Worthing, West Sussex, 6.2hr.

Yesterday: Temp: max 6am to 9pm, 1C (34F); min 9pm to 6am, -4C (25F). Rain: 24hr to 9pm, nil. Sun: 24hr to 9pm, 0.7hr.

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Fog in England and Wales will

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Aberdeen

15:59 s Malaga 17:03 c

16:00 s Malaga 18:01 c

17:01 s Malaga 19:01 c

18:01 s Malaga 20:01 c

19:01 s Malaga 21:01 c

20:01 s Malaga 22:01 c

21:01 s Malaga 23:01 c

22:01 s Malaga 00:01 c

23:01 s Malaga 01:01 c

00:01 s Malaga 02:01 c

01:01 s Malaga 03:01 c

02:01 s Malaga 04:01 c

03:01 s Malaga 05:01 c

04:01 s Malaga 06:01 c

05:01 s Malaga 07:01 c

06:01 s Malaga 08:01 c

07:01 s Malaga 09:01 c

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05:01 s Malaga 07:01 c

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17:01 s Malaga 19:01 c

18:01



BUSINESS 17-21

Why the Old Lady needs its foot soldiers



MEDIA 27

Have we got news for you, Trevor



SPORT 28-32

Midland withdraws backing for top tennis tournament

TELEVISION AND RADIO
Page 31

THE TIMES 2

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 23 1992

Failure of BA's American dream

\$750m air deal withdrawn as open skies talks collapse

BY COLIN NARBROUGH
WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

LORD King, the acquisitive British Airways chairman, has been forced to abort his airline's \$750 million bid for a stake in USAir, the American domestic carrier, after Washington refused to drop its objections to the deal.

Despite the setback, BA intends to pursue "alternative relationships" with USAir and is likely to come back with a substantially scaled down offer in the new year, probably after President-elect Bill Clinton takes office.

A new deal is not expected to involve any link to moves to open up British airports to American airlines. The 44 per cent stake BA sought in USAir was intended to give it the crucial access to the American market at the heart of Lord King's strategic expansion to make BA a truly global operator.

Failure of the deal dashes hopes of a new liberalised air services agreement between Britain and America. Talks between the two governments, which had been going on for months, were immediately suspended and the department of transport withdrew all its offers to allow American airlines greater access to British regional airports.

A transatlantic deadlock over "open skies" for US airlines in Britain has prompted the withdrawal of BA's \$750 million bid for a crucial stake in USAir

ish regional airports. With relations between the two sides at a low, the prospects of more direct trans-Atlantic flights from such regional airports as Birmingham and Manchester seem more remote than ever, although it is hoped that the Clinton administration may be willing to re-open talks.

Last week, BA secured Australian approval to pay £290 million for 25 per cent of Qantas, the national carrier, boosting BA's presence in the Asia-Pacific region. Hopes that BA could round off 1992 with USAir in tow faded last weekend, when it became apparent that even John Major had been unable during his visit to Washington to extract a green light for BA from the Bush administration.

The powerful American airline lobby bitterly opposed the deal, even though USAir urgently needs a strong financial partner.

Leading American carriers argued that the deal, under which the British airline would acquire 21 per cent of the voting rights in USAir,

would have given a foreign company a degree of influence over an American airline that was illegal.

The American airlines insisted that the bid should be coupled with moves towards opening British airports to more competition from America. BA opposed the idea, fearful that its dominant position in London could be undermined.

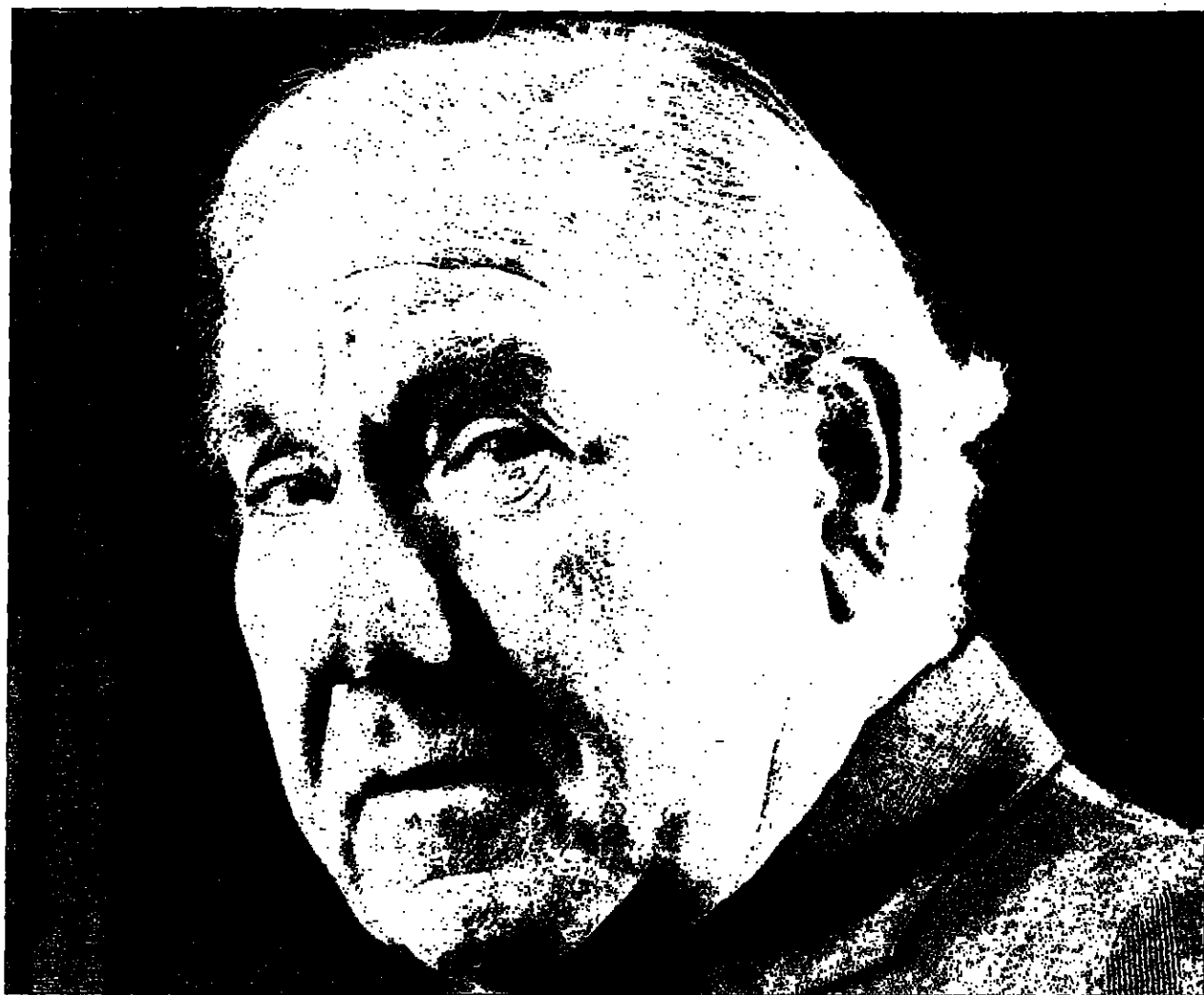
Stephen Wolf, the United States chairman, voiced disappointment at the BA withdrawal. He said "the decision was a 'lost opportunity for all concerned' to liberalise the outdated and heavily restricted aviation agreement between America and Britain."

BA made clear that it was dropping the conditional \$750 million USAir offer on the grounds that it could not be expected to pump in such a large amount of money without a large say in the way the airline was run.

BA appeared relieved that the British government had not agreed to "unwarranted and unilateral concessions" under the bilateral air services agreement.

It described as regrettable that acceptance of its legal offer had been linked to "excessive" demands from the Americans.

The conditional bid was scheduled to lapse on Thursday in the absence of Washington's blessing. The British offer to give American airlines unlimited access to regional airports in this country has now been withdrawn, the transport department said.



King without an American crown: the USAir deal was central to the BA chairman's hopes of a truly global presence

US blames Britain for breakdown

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

ANDREW Card, the American transport secretary, yesterday indicated there was a rift between British Airways and UK officials over negotiating terms of the deal.

He was speaking at a press conference after announcing that BA had terminated its offer for a stake in USAir. Mr Card said he believed moves to block the deal stemmed from UK airlines. He said the British government was supporting a policy of "open

skies" — a condition of the American approval of the BA-USAir deal — but that British airlines had been resistant. "The government in the UK is interested in moving forward. The carriers may not be as forward leaning," he added.

Mr Card said America's main objection to the BA-USAir deal was the UK's refusal to allow American airlines free access to the market for Europeans at

Heathrow airport. He said that he and John MacGregor, his British counterpart, agreed that an open skies policy would benefit both carriers, allowing full and fair competition.

Meanwhile, Wall Street analysts think that Lufthansa, the German airline, may re-open the talks for closer links with USAir that had been going for months before BA's formal July offer.

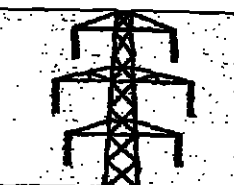
Key to any deal will be a

cash infusion similar to that which would have come with the British Airways deal.

Julius Malin, a Salomon Brothers analyst, said the deal is far from over. He said the news was a pause, not the end, and BA would be back with a winning structure. By the time the Clinton administration took office, USAir would have produced its results for last year, which are expected to show another annual loss of about \$350 million.

BUSINESS TODAY

HIGH POWER



GEC Alsthom, the Anglo-French joint venture, has won a US\$3 billion contract to equip a new power station in Hong Kong
Page 18

HIGH SCORE

Five mining shares selected in January achieved an average appreciation in value of 7.3 per cent
Tempos, page 19

HIGH NOTE



Chris Wright, the founder and chairman of Chrysalis, is planning a return to the record business
Page 18

HIGH FINANCE



Standard Chartered has raised £200 million from property sales, equivalent to a one-for-six rights issue
Page 18

Bush to reject BA links with USAir

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK
John Major will be told next week that

From The Times of December 17

Comment, page 19

Widening trade gap fuels fears on long-term outlook

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S trade performance worsened again in November as imports of consumer goods continued to pour in, despite weak demand, and cost more as the first effects of devaluation came through.

The figures confirmed worries that Britain's manufacturing base is too small to furnish consumers with the goods they want. Even at the bottom of a severe recession, what weak consumer demand there is being met by imports. When recovery comes, Britain's trade performance could deteriorate to unacceptable proportions and act as a long-term restraint on economic growth.

The trade deficit widened to £1.19 billion last month from £950 million in October, according to the Central Statistical Office. More worrying was a deterioration in the underlying deficit, excluding oil and erratic items, to £1.63 billion from £1.43 billion.

These are the classic hallmarks of the "J-curve" effect after devaluations, in which import prices rise before export prices benefit from the boost to

their competitiveness. Import prices rose about 3 per cent in November and there are likely to be more rises over the next few months. These cannot be monitored in the first six months of next year because figures will not be published while Britain switches to a new European standard for collecting data.

The strength of import penetration is unprecedented at this stage of the economic cycle, according to Adam Cole of James Capel. The current account deficit is running at nearly 2 per cent of gross

domestic product. In 1982, roughly the same stage of the last recession, there was a surplus of 1.7 per cent.

The Treasury pointed out that import penetration does seem to have flattened out. Tensions eased in the exchange-rate mechanism after Helmut Schlesinger, the Bundesbank president, appeared to adopt a less hawkish tone about inflation. He said lower inflation could lead to 6 per cent market interest rates in the medium term.

The mark came under pressure as dealers speculated that the German central bank may be conceding the case for lower interest rates early next year. The dollar rose to DM1.5865 from DM1.5760.

Sterling dropped on disappointment about the trade figures, closing at DM2.4385 from DM2.4515 on Monday and dropping nearly 3 cents to \$1.5380. Hopes of more rate cuts if the Germans cut their interest rates boosted British shares. The FT-SE 100 closed 34.3 points higher at a record 2,842.



Schlesinger: less hawkish

Shares hit another record close

BY MICHAEL CLARK

ANOTHER fast-moving performance by the futures market, where the March series touched a peak of 2,891, squeezed share prices higher and enabled the London stock market to extend its record-breaking run.

The FT-SE 100 index recovered from a hesitant start to close 34.3 points up at a high of 2,842. The index has risen 101 point in the past three trading sessions.

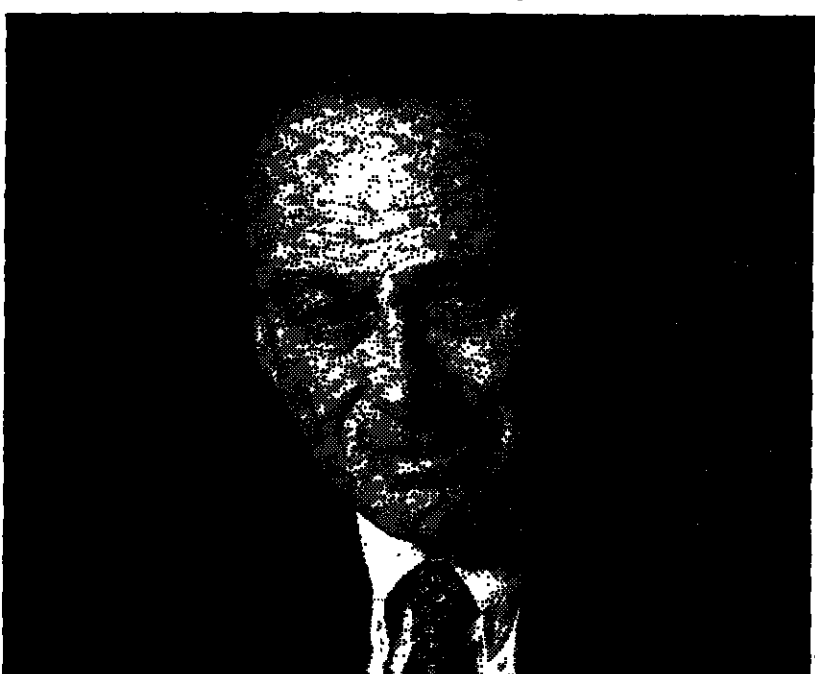
Bullish brokers predict that it will move higher over the Christmas period to touch 2,900, reflecting the view that 1993 will be a year of economic recovery.

Turnover reached 815 million shares, bolstered again by "bed and breakfast" transactions to establish year-end tax losses, the squaring up of fund managers' portfolios and straddling by arbitrageurs between cash and futures.

Genuine retail business appeared to be thin: stock shortages and absence of sellers exaggerated price movements.

Stock market, page 20

DOES YOUR ADVISER BELIEVE IN THE FRENCH AND GERMAN BOND?



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OFT will not refer credit card business

BY NEIL BENNETT
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE Office of Fair Trading has given the banks an early Christmas present by deciding not to refer the credit and debit card business to the monopolies commission after a two-year investigation.

Sir Bryan Carsberg, OFT director-general, said a formal investigation of the market was not appropriate, despite complaints from food retailers, including Tesco and Sainsbury's, about the rise in debit card processing fees.

The OFT said there was no evidence that the banks had colluded to fix

merchant acquiring charges, the fees that retailers pay for card transactions, and that the banks were not making excess profits from the business.

However, Sir Bryan said he will continue informal enquiries into several areas of the market, and may try to abolish the banks' stranglehold on the merchant acquiring business.

At the moment only card issuers can also be merchant acquirers. Sir Bryan said he would examine the market to see if retailers and independent companies should also be allowed to become merchant acquirers.

The OFT is also expected to ask debit

card issuers and charge card companies to abandon their no-discrimination rule in the new year. This would enable retailers to charge more for goods bought by Switch or American Express.

Despite these conditions, the banks were overjoyed. Richard Reay-Smith, chief executive of Barclays Central Retail Services division, said: "We have demonstrated that card processing is a very competitive business and that larger retailers often receive these services at prices which are below cost."

The British Retail Consortium in turn welcomed further investigation into card charges.

THE POUND

US dollar 1.5390 (-0.0245)
German mark 2.4419 (-0.0097)
Exchange index 79.6 (-0.7)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2184.5 (+24.8)
FT-SE 100 2842.0 (+34.3)
New York Dow Jones 3317.32 (+4.86)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 17690.67 (+45.23)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 7%
3-month interbank 7 1/4%
3-month eligible bills 6 1/2-6 3/4%
US: Prime Rate 6%
Federal Funds 2 1/4%
3-month Treasury bills 3.21-3.19%
30-year bonds 103-103 1/2

CURRENCIES

London: New York: £ \$1.5390
DM £2.4419
Sfr £2.2044
FFr £1.170
Yen £169.80
Index 79.6
ECU £0.800835
ECU £2.49055
London Forex market close

GOLD

London Fixing: AM \$324.35 PM \$332.60
Close \$332.10-\$32.50
1215 50-215.80
New York: Comex \$322.25-\$32.75*

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Jan) \$18.30/bbl (\$18.55)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 139.7 November (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

GEC wins \$3bn HK power deal

By COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

DESPITE the political turbulence over Hong Kong, GEC Alsthom, the Anglo-French generating plant joint venture, in a consortium with America's General Electric, has won a contract, worth up to US\$3 billion, to equip a new power station in the crown colony.

About 40 per cent of the work on the plant — which is the largest order for a combined cycle gas-turbine power station placed this year and Britain's biggest plant of its kind — will be carried out in Britain. Factories in France and America will get about 30 per cent each.

The deal, secured in competition with Siemens of

Germany, provides an important end-of-year boost to British exports, the growth rate of which has started to flag in recent months despite the more competitive pound. Negotiations were led by Nick Salmon, deputy managing director of GEC Alsthom's gas turbine division.

The contract for Castle Peak power Company (Capco), which is owned by China Light and Power and Exco, is for a 2,400 megawatt gas-fired combined cycle gas turbine power plant for the new Black Point station. Capco runs all power stations in the Kowloon and New Territories districts.

China Light said the consortium was chosen on the basis of its lower cost. The winning tender contained highly competitive financing, involving long-term export credits. Work on the project will start immediately.

Kevin Bray, managing director at GEC Alsthom, was delighted with the deal, which he described as one of the most prestigious power generation projects in the world. He forecasted a brighter profit outlook despite paying out £385,000 for staff severance costs (Philip Pangalos writes).

The USM-quoted company reported operating profits ahead 77.6 per cent to £904,000 in the six months to end-October. Pre-tax profits rose 2 per cent to £519,000. Earnings were 3.4p (3.3p) a share. The shares rose 3p to 103p.

Border raises payout after profit forecast

BORDER Television, the Cumbrian regional operator chaired by Melvyn Bragg, proposes to raise its interim dividend to 1.5p (1.1p) after forecasting a brighter profit outlook despite paying out £385,000 for staff severance costs (Philip Pangalos writes).

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Play it again: profits encouraged Chris Wright to return to the record business.

Chrysalis to launch new label

By PHILIP PANGALOS

CHRYSLIS Group, the music publishing to media services group that sold its record division to Thorn EMI last year, has bounced back into the blues and confirmed plans to return to the record business with the launch of a new label after March.

The sale of the rest of Chrysalis's loss-making label to Thorn EMI for £11.6 million was mainly responsible for group pre-tax profits of £5.63 million in the year to end-August, compared with a £9.33 million loss. Chrysalis sold the remainder of the label to Thorn EMI in November last year after forming

a joint venture with Thorn in 1989. To boost the group's proposed return to the record business, Chris Wright, Chrysalis's founder and chairman, has recruited Steve Lewis, former managing director of Virgin Music Publishing.

Mr Lewis left Virgin when Richard Branson sold it to Thorn this year. "We've got a very good shot at rebuilding a major record company. Hopefully we will learn from past mistakes, especially from moving into the US," Mr Wright said.

Despite the revived figures, he said the year had started slowly although trade was

Standard property sells for £136m

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

STANDARD Chartered has raised an additional £136 million from the sale of a portfolio of properties in the Far East, including its head office in Hong Kong.

Standard has now raised £200 million from property sales in the past week — equivalent to a one-for-six rights issue. The bank has made a profit of about £100 million on the disposals, offsetting the losses it made this summer in the Bombay stock market crash.

Standard is raising £74 million from the sale of most of its remaining interests in its Hong Kong head office in Des Voeux Road. The cost of the bank's lease on the building was only £2 million, since Standard has held the site since the last century.

The property will still be called the Standard Chartered building for another 20 years, while Standard will retain ownership of its branch on the ground floor and the neighbouring retail space. A spokesman said that the sale did not mean the bank was weakening its ties with Hong Kong.

The bank is also selling its manager's house in Malaysia, for £20 million, and several managers' houses in Singapore for £40 million. The Malaysian sale paves the way for Standard to float a minority stake in its Malaysian subsidiary before October 1994 to comply with local law.

The sales boost Standard's capital ratios to more than 10 per cent and allow it to increase its balance sheet by about £3.5 billion.

Sotheby's and Christie's increase auction sales

SOTHEBY'S and Christie's, the world's two largest fine art auctioneers, have announced increased auction sales in the year to December 22. Sotheby's reported sales of £674 million (£639 million) compared with £631 million (£583 million) at Christie's.

The figures do not include private treaty sales. In the important autumn season, Sotheby's reported sales of £318 million (£290 million). Christie's saw sales rise 17 per cent to £312 million. Competition between the two houses has led to Christmas redundancies. Christie's has made 60 people redundant. Since 1990, its workforce has been reduced by 20 per cent and costs have been cut by £32 million. Sotheby's has shed 10 jobs and plans more cuts.

Europtics to open plant

UP to 180 jobs could be created by an optical components factory due to open at Whiston, Merseyside, in September next year. The plant will be operated by Europtics, a joint venture company owned by BICC, the British cables and construction group, and Japanese companies, Furukawa, the cable manufacturer, and NTT, the telecommunications company. The main product will be the MT connector, which is used for optical fibre inter-connection in telecommunications and data communications.

Albrighton buys quarries

ALBRIGHTON, the quarrying group, is buying Tarmac's Albion business, comprising five quarries in Derbyshire and the North of England, for £2.2 million. The acquisition will be funded from a £4.96 million rights issue of shares at 12p. Existing shareholders rose 2p to 12p. Albrighton reported a pre-tax loss of £62,000 in the six months to end-September (£347,000 loss), with a 1p loss per share (5.5p loss). There is again no dividend. Tarmac said the sale raised the total from its disposal programme this year to £130 million.

Upton plans share issue

UPTON and Southern, the department store and property group facing severe financial difficulties, is proposing to raise £785,000 through a deeply discounted share issue. The company disclosed that its liabilities outweigh its assets by more than £1.7 million and it has bank debts of £5.9 million. New funds are being raised by way of a firm placing of 65 million shares with financial institutions and an open offer of 36.07 million new shares. The equity is priced at 1p, a sharp discount to the existing shares, which trade at 5p.

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EC merger policy takes wrong turn

One of the most significant appointments in yesterday's reshuffle of European commissioners was that of Belgium's Karel van Miert, who will succeed Sir Leon Brittan as the competition commissioner. Sir Leon actually believed in the sort of competition policy operated in Britain or by Germany's cartel office, yet failed to deliver one. Mr van Miert, an affable socialist previously in charge of transport, has tended to the corporatist view and is unlikely even to try.

The very purpose of competition policy is disputed within the Community. The issue is not intervention but whether policy should operate independently on its own terms or become an arm of industrial policy. The Anglo-Saxon view is that the competition directorate should stop companies creating dominant market positions and crack down on abuses of market power. The Latin mercantilist faction reckons the commission should bolster an EC company's, or even an industry's, competitiveness.

There is likewise no agreement that the policy, once agreed, should operate free of political interference. EC vetting of competition and mergers works under a shroud of secrecy. Political factors have had an ever-larger bearing on individual cases, such as Sir Leon has sometimes tried to resist them. This greatly increases uncertainty and moral hazard.

This is bad news when the commission is, inevitably, trying to accrue more power to the centre. The first thing Mr van Miert should do is to scrap Sir Leon's recent proposal to lower the thresholds at which the commission has first right to vet mergers. Experience so far suggests the thresholds should be raised much higher, leaving the EC to vet only mergers that are so large and sensitive that politics is bound to play some part anyway. He can also defuse rows by passing back many more competition cases to national level. Most of all, Mr van Miert should carry on where Sir Leon failed and work towards some agreement on the purpose, and limitations, of an EC-wide competition policy.

Takeoff delayed

British Airways' shareholders should not be as sad as airline passengers that the American administration has vetoed its attempt to take a dominant stake in troubled USAir. The deal was costly and inferior to the proposed merger with KLM, which would have brought Northwest Airlines into a global network, but broke down over some fancy Dutch ideas on terms. A revival of those talks looks appealing but affairs have moved on, most notably through BA's investment in Qantas. More likely is a humbler deal for BA to take up to 25 per cent of USAir at a much lower cost. This would still enable integration of networks and marketing, without helping USAir so decisively to improve its finances and competitive strength. The lower cost to BA, which already has many commitments on its plate, if not its balance sheet, might leave its investment less secure.

For travellers, an opportunity has been lost to break down formal protection in America and the informal British stranglehold over Heathrow and other domestic airports through possession of a limited number of landing slots. One refusal to stretch a point inevitably invites another in this most political of industries, whatever the good intentions claimed for both governments. The regrets of United Airlines, one of the strongest public opponents of the USAir deal, are notable. BA naturally does not want its Heathrow business handed to foreign competitors, any more than it appreciated its traffic being given to smaller British airlines. An empty Stansted could offer an alternative hub to be adopted and built up by the big three American carriers, were they so minded.

Bank of England looks to investors in gilts to win the deficit battle

Janet Bush says that money markets staff must steel their nerves for the biggest financing job since the 1970s

On September 16, it was the Bank of England's money markets staff who were pushed over the top of the trenches and into front-line warfare with the financial markets. The day when the Bank's paymasters in Whitehall saw their exchange-rate mechanism policy bite the dust, was a fearsome test of nerves.

But there is a more gruelling campaign ahead — financing the huge budget deficit racked up during the recession. It's the Bank's job to find enough investors willing to lend the government the estimated £1 billion a week that will be needed.

The Bank, more than ever before, is going to need the co-operation of its foot-soldiers in the fight to finance the deficit — the men and women of the gilt-edged market. This arcane world of steepening yield curves, "eights of 2009" and reverse yield gaps will take centre stage in the effort to manage Britain's parlous financial position until recovery bails it out.

Forecasters generally agree the public sector borrowing requirement will hit at least £44 billion in fiscal 1993-4, about 7 per cent of gross domestic product. This assumes the Treasury gets the 1 per cent growth rate it is expecting next year, which is more optimistic than many private forecasts. Britain has not seen this large a financing job since the 1970s fiscal crisis, when the International Monetary Fund was called in.

Many of the world's richest nations are running large deficits. But, alone among them, Britain relies exclusively on sales of sterling bonds to finance its shortfall, putting a huge burden on the gilt market.

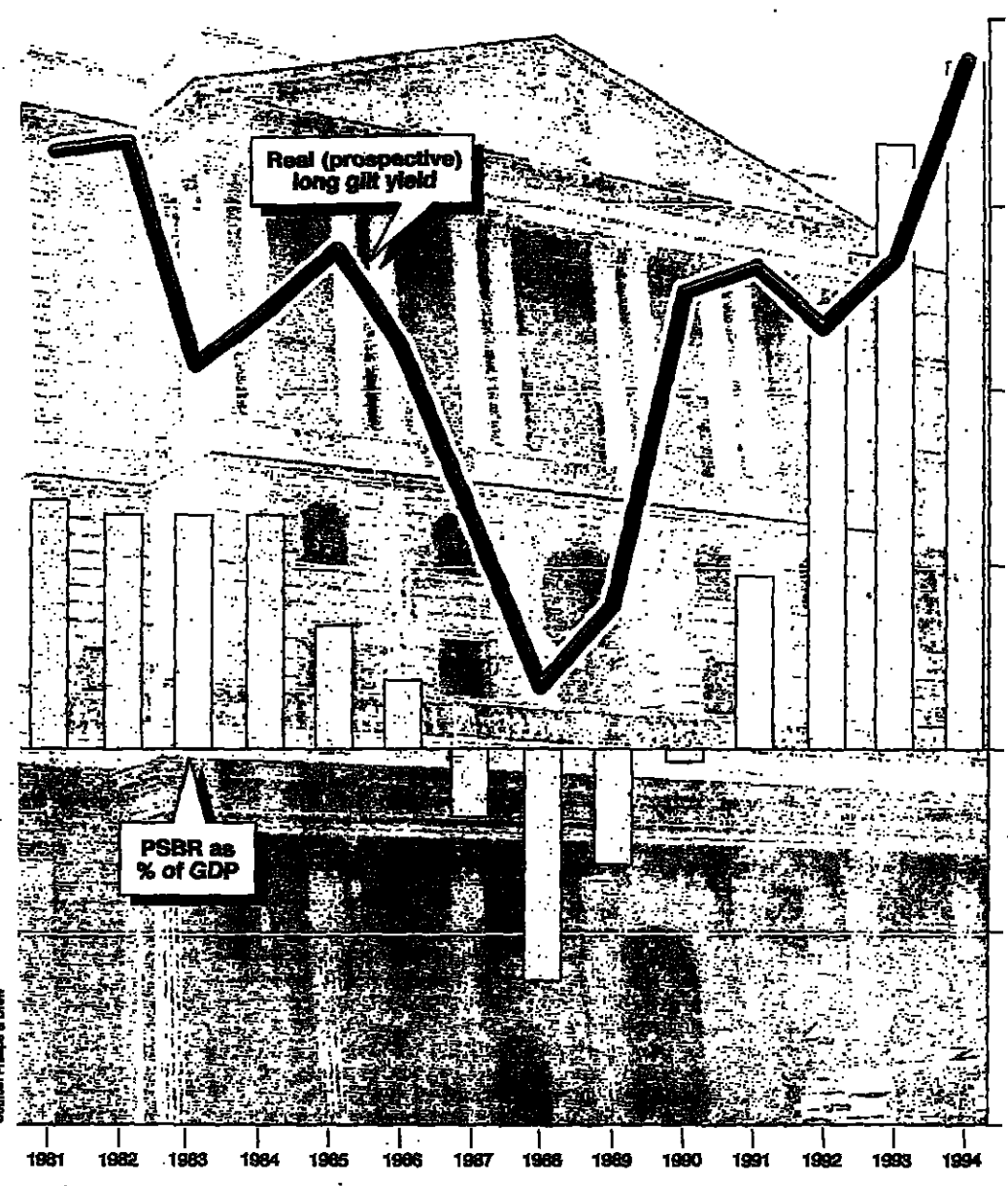
Most market estimates suggest the Bank of England will have to issue about £50 billion of gilts next year. Gilt-edged market-makers are privately expressing deep concern that this could disrupt and weaken the market, and are calling for the Bank to adapt its current practice of issuing gilts to the market.

It has been working on an informal timetable of bi-monthly gilt auctions, supplemented with *ad hoc* tapes and tranches sold into pockets of demand. John Sheppard, of Warburg Securities, believes, among other things, the Bank should move to monthly auctions.

The current bi-monthly sales have never exceeded the Bank's informal limit of £3 billion. But, if next year's forecasts are correct, about £6 billion would have to be sold at each auction, too much for many in the gilt market to feel comfortable with. Clearly, the market is concerned for its own financial health. With £6 billion auctions, many of them would either have to supplement their capital or take larger risks.

But the main interest of the Bank is

REAL GILT YIELD AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR BORROWING REQUIREMENT



to keep down the cost of funding for the government and that means maximum flexibility in the timing of gilt sales and the techniques used. Although the Bank is aware of the market's concerns, it appears to have no immediate plans for change. It believes it has a good track record on tailoring the array of gilts on offer to the various demands of investors and a good sense of timing.

The Bank sees the next year as a marketing challenge, not a crisis. Nevertheless, according to Michael Hughes, chief investment strategist at BZW: "The Bank will need every trick in the book."

As the deluge of gilts starts flooding on to the market, there are bound to be tensions between the needs of the market, already weathering fiercely competitive conditions, and the Bank's interests.

The Bank may want to retain maximum flexibility in how it sells its gilts but it cannot afford to lose the goodwill of market-makers. Many of them want to know how the Bank is going to schedule all the necessary gilt sales. Ian Shepherson, of Midland Global Markets, said: "With this much supply, the market has a

right to know how it is going to work."

However, although there has been some wild talk of "buyers strikes", there is no question that the deficit will be financed. The big question is whether the Bank will be able to keep the cost of funding down. First, however good at its job the Bank may be, it might not always be able to push out stock when market conditions are best suited and its cost of borrowing will be higher.

Mr Sheppard said: "If the market weakens, if there were some bad inflation figures, the government can't stop the conveyor belt because it will get behind. And if it gets behind, it gets into trouble."

An even more fundamental question is whether there will be enough demand. The amount of gilts to be sold next year is much larger than total expected British institutional cash flow, estimated at about £35 billion.

Theoretically, if there is a deficit in the public sector, there will be a matching surplus in the private sector to finance it. The challenge for the

Bank will be in identifying where that money is and luring it into gilts. One source of extra money could be private individuals. As interest rates on building society deposits, for example, have fallen, so individuals have become more active in gilts, even at longer maturities where the yields are higher.

However, individual investors are never going to be able to plug the gap alone and overseas investment becomes ever more important. In 1991, foreigners were substantial buyers of gilts, but, over the past year, their net purchases have been negligible. The Bank needs to see them come back in.

Much will depend on economic conditions — notoriously difficult to predict and subject to fierce debate. The judge and jury of the gilt market is a view of inflationary trends and, after sterling's abrupt departure from the ERM, forecasting them is a stab in the dark.

Two of the largest gilt houses held conferences within a week of each other in November. Midland Global Markets predicted that long-dated yields would drop from 8½ per cent to 7½ per cent over the course of next year, a forecast based on the view that

inflation will remain subdued next year. A week later, Warburg Securities predicted yields rising to 9½ per cent because of a less optimistic view on inflation. The difference between such forecasts represents a huge cost or saving to the government.

Another imponderable is what happens to inflation and interest rates in countries competing for international investment funds. If rates fall in Europe next year, for example, British yields may become more attractive by standing still. What is clear is that the government has no choice but to offer yields attractive enough to lure unprecedented levels of investment.

However the economic chips fall next year, experience suggests that yields have moved in close tandem with government finances. When the deficit is high, yields rise too. That is damaging for two main reasons. First, the government has to pay more to borrow — an unwelcome burden on the taxpayer, particularly at a time when talk of tax increases is in the air. Second, and far more important, if the economy is to come back to health, higher yields threaten to "crowd out" borrowing by companies as it did in the 1970s. At a time when there is an insatiable thirst for investment funds around the world, the need to suck so much money into the gilt market will inevitably starve other sectors of the funds they need.

Everything depends on recovery gradually bringing the deficit down. One year of heavy funding may not be too onerous, particularly as Britain is expected to come out of recession just as competitor nations in Europe, for example, are going in. What would be alarming is years of slow growth and huge deficits.

Mr Shepherson said: "The gilt market needs to see credible figures showing that the PSBR is coming down. They can't cope with the deficit going on rising into the wild blue yonder."

If it does, many believe the government may have to abandon its policy of "fully funding" the PSBR. This rule adopted by the monetarist mandarins at the Treasury in the 1980s means that gilt sales have to match the PSBR pound for pound. Gilt sales to banks, for example, do not count as funding. The idea is that the monetary authorities have a huge degree of control over the amount of liquidity in the economy, a useful tool in monitoring inflation.

Underfunding the PSBR — selling less gilts than needed to finance the whole borrowing requirement and making up the difference by lending to banks — would pump more liquidity into the economy. It is a policy advocated by many, including Professor Tim Congdon, one of the Treasury's new panel of economic advisers, not least as a potent force for recovery.

Many in the gilt market want to see underfunding because it would relieve some of the pressure on them. The Treasury remains reluctant to change its policy, but, under the weight of massive financing requirements in a world where investment funds are ever more thinly spread, it may find it will have to borrow wherever it can.

Pension compensation law needed

From Mr Colin Stewart

Sir, It does not surprise me that the NAPF had to back down on its proposal for a compensation scheme for pensioners, but that does not mean that it is not a good idea. If the Life Offices Association (as it then was) had made a similar proposal for compensating life assurance policyholders in 1975, the members of that body, too, would have been up in arms. Quite properly, it was left to the government to introduce the Policyholders' Protection Act 1975, but that followed on after new statutory requirements for ensuring adequate funding and the security of

policyholders' assets. What is now required is similar legislation to ensure adequacy of pension scheme funding and security of the corresponding assets. After that, it should be possible to introduce a Pensioners' Protection Scheme which may be expected to operate as painlessly as the Policyholders' Protection Scheme in life assurance. It is my understanding that there has been only one relatively modest claim under that scheme in the past 17 years. Yours faithfully, COLIN STEWART, 8 The Chase, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Simple retaliation against imported turkeys

From Mr Philip Virgo

Sir, Mrs Nicholas's lament at British turkey growers' inability to retaliate against the decision to fill Argyl shelves with dumped French turkeys is unnecessarily pessimistic. I am not a turkey grower but I switched to Asda when I read the article "Argyl offers cheer".

That article stimulated me into making a general point of buying British this Christmas — admittedly counting Aus-

tralian and New Zealand wines as British. Regrettably, this necessitates checking "country of origin" on goods bearing brand names from stores which supposedly make a point of buying British.

The exercise may have cost time but has not cost money. I've spent less than last year, sacrificed no quality and learned much in the process. Yours faithfully, PHILIP VIRGO, 2 Eastbourne Avenue, W3.

Midland listens but does not tell

From Mr Ivor Clementson

Sir, I do hope that the Chancellor was more successful in getting answers from the chairman of the Midland Bank than I have been.

After being subjected to a number of charges by the said bank, I enquired as to how the amounts charged could be justified. I was told that they were to cover the costs incurred by the bank. I then, I thought reasonably, asked for a breakdown of those costs. The branch manager replied that he was not privy to such information. A letter to the chairman elicited a reply from a lady deputed to act on his behalf that it was not the bank's policy to impart the information. I then, by chance, received a leaflet from the managing director in which it was stated that the bank would be as honest with me as I was with them. Taking him up on his generous commitment, I made the same request of him. His representative replied that the bank was not required to give me the information.

I further asked for a reassurance that since, apparently, the charges were levied to cover costs, it was reasonable for me to assume that no element of either profit to the bank nor penalty upon me was contained within them. All three were, it seems, unable to follow my logic, since all have ignored the question altogether.

Yours faithfully, IVOR CLEMENTSON, 3 Redcote, 51 Burgh Heath Road, Epsom, Surrey.

Letters can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Family link ends at Inchcape

THE new year will see the end of an era at Inchcape, the international motors and services group, when the last of the founding Mackay family, Lord Tanlaw, steps down as a director. His half-brother, Lord Inchcape, who in 1958 brought together the various partnerships that made Inchcape, continues as life president. However, from January 1, there will be no board member bearing the name of their grandfather, who founded the firm. Now, somewhat confusingly, the only Mackay remaining will be Charles Mackay, chief executive, a fellow clansman but not part of the family. Meanwhile, Tanlaw, 58, UK managing director in the 1960s, has been reflecting on his own varied career. He stood for parliament three times, and, in his spare time, is a keen horologist, looking after Big Ben for a spell. "It is sad that the family connection will be gone, but my own company needs me full time," he says. That company is Fanstian Electric, a railway engineering specialist whose projects for 1993 include the electrification of the Jubilee Line in partnership with GEC.

SIR George Turnbull, the man who brought Inchcape up to speed with the times, died yesterday. He had been in ill health for several months. Sir George, 66, joined as chairman and chief executive in 1986 and stepped down in November last year for health reasons.

Bear necessities

IN KEEPING with the festive spirit, Kleinwort Benson has put a large grizzly bear on the front cover of its new traded options and futures handbook and is offering a bottle of champagne to the client offering the best caption. The bear has a mournful demeanour but KB's John Price says it is not a statement about his house's market view. "We just thought it was a bit of fun. He's a rather a special bear." Far from being bearish, KB is expanding into continental equity options and futures and has just raided rival Warburg to recruit salesman Nigel Couch, 30.

Bouncing back

STEPHEN Clapham, one of the casualties of the purge at Nomura in October, has bounced back. He will start work at Crédit Lyonnais next month. He will cover his old beat researching the transport sector while adding a new interest, conglomerates. Clapham started his City career at Hoare Govett, where he was rated fourth in transport, before shifting to Nomura to cover the electricity industry sell-off. Crédit Lyonnais has been recruiting a number of able researchers in recent weeks, in areas such as smaller companies, engineering and insurance. According to Clapham, this could have something to do with its unusual interviewing technique — while most houses are keen to see examples of the interviewee's research, CL is the only one in his experience to proffer examples of its own instead.

Flurry of interest

THE most employable people in the City at the moment — according to head hunter Nicholas Cobbold, of Knight

Wendling — are international fixed interest fund managers. He has just received five requests to find people in this field, all likely to be in their thirties and with basic salaries on offer ranging from £70,000 to £100,000. "There is definitely a flurry of activity in the international fixed interest arena," he observes, "and I think it's going to be an active market for the next few years. It helps if you have overseas experience, particularly in the US or Far East. Firms are becoming much broader in their outlook, much more international."

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Shine comes off metals during 1992

Colin Campbell explains why it has been hard to make money in mining shares

MINING markets and metal prices were full of pitfalls during 1992. With the exception of platinum, which proved to be the best-performing precious metal, and Canadian diamond shares, which have lately enjoyed a speculative run, it was hard to make money in the sector.

Gold started the year at \$353 an ounce and yesterday stood at \$339. Copper, aluminium, and tin managed to end higher. But zinc and nickel are below their year's starting points.

With world inflation seemingly under control, and political events no longer exercising a strong influence on precious metals, investors continued to show boredom with gold. Not even September's foreign exchange crisis won the metal new friends.

Fears of South African mine disruption also failed to materialise. In January, the market's best hope was that gold would reach \$450 an ounce during 1992. In the event, it reached a high of \$359.25 in mid-July, and by mid-October was down at \$333.95 an ounce.

The thinking of Tempus in January, when five mining shares were selected for a 1992 portfolio, was that they would be survivors in an uncertain world. At that time, there was still excess capacity and industrial demand was weak.

The outcome is that the big established mining groups — RTZ and Phelps Dodge — have served investors well, and that Sons of Gwalia also held its head up creditably. The two smaller Irish metals groups, Arcon International and Resources, which changed its name from Conroy Petroleum during 1992 and Burmin Exploration, failed to make headway by year's end. The portfolio still managed an average appreciation of 7.3 per cent.

RTZ, the group's philosophy about surviving, and growing, in the world of mining says it all — to be a significant owner and operator within a particular minerals sector, and to

have the lowest possible cost structure. The group's financial discipline and overall mining efficiency make the share a core holding. Although 1992 net attributable profits, at a possible \$343 million compared with \$354 million in 1991 — would be the second successive setback, the annual dividend is undoubtedly safe at 19.5p.

There is the distinct hint of a profits recovery in 1993, possibly to \$420 million, and probably a higher dividend, too. Phelps Dodge The copper price inched forward from 98 to 100 cents a pound during 1992, and there is every prospect that copper could move forward faster next year, to average 110 cents a pound for the year. The group is America's largest copper producer, and politically safe. Hold.

Sons of Gwalia Still liked by London investors

HOW WE FARED

Tempus mining tips for 1992	% change
RTZ	+24.72
Phelps Dodge	+44.97
Sons of Gwalia	+20.25
Arcon*	-29.63
Burmin	-23.81
Average growth	+7.3
*formerly Conroy	

for its gold properties in Australia and for its mine grades. Gold in 1993 may again fail to excite, yet the shares should continue to attract a following.

Arcon International Having survived a boardroom coup, and now that the O'Reilly family is a major shareholder, attention can again be focused on getting the group's Galmoy zinc/lead deposit up and running. The shares sank to 23p at one point, but should have seen bottom. Hold on.

Burmin Exploration The group has exploration links with Sipa Resources, but mining projects are still in their infancy and the shares retain their speculative tinge.

Mining selections for 1993 will be published shortly.

COLIN CAMPBELL
Mining Correspondent

Futures trading inspires yet another record run

SHARE prices extended their record-breaking run, squeezed higher by another impressive performance on the futures market.

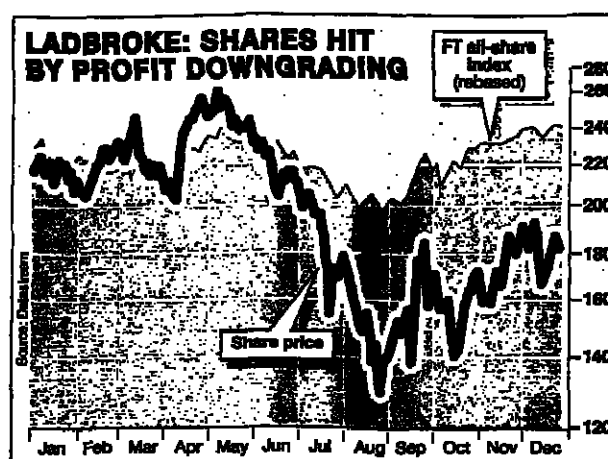
The FT-SE 100 Index recovered from a hesitant start and continued to grow in confidence throughout the session, closing near the best of the day with a rise of 34.3 to an all-time high of 2,842. Turnover was another impressive 815 million shares, only slightly down on Monday's total of 833 million.

But it was the futures market that once again made the early running as investors continued to take an optimistic view of economic prospects for 1993. The March series continued to boast a strong premium compared with the cash market, touching 2,891 at one stage.

One New York securities house was a big buyer of the future, forcing traders to start covering their positions. There were certainly indications of large-scale arbitrage between the cash and futures market. Bid and breakfast operations designed to establish year-end and tax losses and the squaring up of fund manager's portfolios also helped to swell turnover.

Conditions in the cash market are also looking squeezed and the situation is being exacerbated by the lack of sellers. But there is evidence to indicate that investors with genuine retail interest in the market are increasingly focusing their attention on second line stocks. The FT-SE Mid index of 250 top shares ended the session 28 points higher at 2,845.4.

Government securities



shrugged off the latest trade figures and drew strength from the latest out in Italian interest rates. Dealers reported renewed retail interest, with supplies of one of the three recently issued taplets exhausted. The longer end of the market sported gains of more than 1p. British Airways

Bid hopes drove the A shares of Savoy, the hotelier, 83p higher to 713p in thin market conditions. The price has risen 156p in the past two days and talk of an agreed bid from Forte is gathering pace. Forte owns the bulk of the shares in issue, but only a minority of votes. Talk that Forte may choose to place its holding is adding to the speculation.

climbed 5p to 307p after pulling out of the proposed \$750 million link with USAIR, BA has agreed to buy a 25 per cent stake in Qantas, the Australian state-owned airline, which is soon to be privatised. There was limited support for other leading shares, with fund managers taking the view that many of them are starting to look fairly valued. The trading screens

to be little cheer in-store for Ladbroke, the property, betting and hotel group, as analysts continue cutting their profit forecasts.

County NatWest weighed in yesterday with its second downgrading in the space of a week. It has cut its forecast for the current year by £10 million to £185 million and for next year by £18 million to £212 million. It is now at the bottom end of estimates.

Trading at Texas Homecare and the chain of Hilton overseas hotels continues to be disappointing. The pound's devaluation has also caused problems for the group which has a large amount of overseas debt.

Mallett, the Bond Street antiques dealer, jumped 19p to 73p on news that the group had received a bid approach. The bidder is thought to be Asprey, the Queen's silversmith and jeweller, which has acquired almost 7 per cent of the company. Mallett slumped to a low of 23p this year after disappointing figures. House of Fraser holds 25 per cent of Mallett. Asprey, which is quoted on the USM, firmed 5p to 29p.

Shares of Star Computer were suspended 5p higher at 47p, awaiting details of a major acquisition. Airtronic touched 26p after recovering to end the session 2p lower at 27.5p after being given approval to proceed with its bid for Pickfords Travel Service. But sentiment has been dented by the package holiday price war that has broken out. Owners Abroad was another casualty, easing 2p to 85p.

MICHAEL CLARK

Investor confidence gives Dow early lift

New York — Shares were higher in early trading, lifted by growing investor confidence that the American economy is improving, analysts said.

They said that a final revision of the third-quarter gross domestic product — to a growth rate of 3.4 per cent compared with 3.9 per cent previously — had helped sentiment. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 9.72 points to 3,322.18.

Tokyo — Shares ended firmer in thin, narrow-range trading. The Nikkei average was up 45.23 points, or 0.26 per cent, to 17,690.67.

Hong Kong — Institutional

orders outweighed mild profit-taking to give Hong Kong shares their second gain in as many days, although turnover was thin, brokers said. The Hang Seng index closed up 55.26 points, at 5,297.74.

Singapore — Share prices closed lower due to profit-taking in blue chips by foreign institutions, brokers said. The Straits Times industrial index fell 22.33 points to 1,489.16.

Sydney — The All Ordinaries index finished seven points down, at 1,530.1.

Frankfurt — The Dax index ended 0.5 per cent up, at 1,523.57, six points off its high.

Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 22	Dec 21
Monday	Sunday	Tuesday	Monday	Tuesday	Monday
AMP Inc	50	50	50	50	50
AMP Corp	50	50	50	50	50
AMP Ltd	50	50	50	50	50
AMP PLC	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (UK)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (US)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (CAN)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (AUS)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (NZ)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (JAP)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (KOR)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (HKG)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (SIN)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (SYD)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (FRA)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (GER)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (ITA)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (ESP)	50	50	50	50	50
AMP (BEL)	50	50	50	50	50
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Portfolio Plus

From your Portfolio Plus card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall gain or loss, and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No	Company	Gain or Loss
1	Refrance 'B'	Tobacco
2	Holmes	Industrial
3	Tipitaka	Transport
4	Bradford	Property
5	EIS	Industrial
6	Countdown	Chemicals
7	Aspley	Motor/Air
8	NFC	Transport
9	Compass	Leisure
10	Ellis & Eward	Chemicals
11	Finlay	Foods
12	Hill & Smith	Industrial
13	Ud Biscuits	Foods
14	Son TV	Leisure
15	Powerstream	Industrial
16	Bristol	Newspaper/Pub
17	Dominic	Electrical
18	Booker	Foods
19	Johnson Math	Industrial
20	Prudential	Insurance
21	Sturge Hedges	Insurance
22	Norwich	Electrical
23	Schneider	Banking
24	Ud Newspaper	Newspaper/Pub
25	Pendragon	Motor/Air
26	Midland	Industrial
27	Eurotherm	Electrical
28	ACT Group	Electrical
29	Brit Filings	Building/Rd
30	Brit (J)	Banking
31	Wilson Bowden	Building/Rd
32	Westpac	Banking
33	HSBC	Banking
34	Morland	Banking
35	Nin Road	Foods
36	Allied Colloid	Industrial
37	Bonnie Ltd	Industrial
38	Refuge	Insurance

Please take into account any minus signs

E1,000 MATCH THE SHARES

If you have ticked off your eighth share in our Match The Shares game today, claim your prize by telephoning 0254 53272 between 10.00am and 3.30pm (see the Sunday Times for full details)

There were no valid claims for yesterday's Portfolio Plus prize. The £2,000 will be added to today's game.

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

No	Company	Price	Net Yld	P/E
39	39 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
40	40 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
41	41 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
42	42 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
43	43 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
44	44 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
45	45 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
46	46 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
47	47 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
48	48 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
49	49 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
50	50 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
51	51 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
52	52 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
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69	69 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
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94	94 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
95	95 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
96	96 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
97	97 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
98	98 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
99	99 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
100	100 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3

BREWERIES

No	Company	Price	Net Yld	P/E
101	101 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
102	102 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
103	103 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
104	104 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
105	105 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
106	106 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
107	107 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
108	108 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
109	109 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
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112	112 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
113	113 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
114	114 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
115	115 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
116	116 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
117	117 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
118	118 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
119	119 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
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145	145 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
146	146 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
147	147 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
148	148 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
149	149 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
150	150 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3

BUILDING, ROADS

No	Company	Price	Net Yld	P/E
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152	152 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
153	153 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
154	154 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
155	155 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
156	156 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
157	157 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
158	158 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
159	159 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
160	160 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
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162	162 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
163	163 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
164	164 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
165	165 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
166	166 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
167	167 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
168	168 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
169	169 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
170	170 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
171	171 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
172	172 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
173	173 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
174	174 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
175	175 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
176	176 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
177	177 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
178	178 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
179	179 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
180	180 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
181	181 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
182	182 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
183	183 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
184	184 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
185	185 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
186	186 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
187	187 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
188	188 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
189	189 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
190	190 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
191	191 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
192	192 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
193	193 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
194	194 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
195	195 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
196	196 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
197	197 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
198	198 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
199	199 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
200	200 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3

BUSINESS SERVICES

No	Company	Price	Net Yld	P/E
201	201 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
202	202 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
203	203 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
204	204 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
205	205 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
206	206 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
207	207 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
208	208 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
209	209 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
210	210 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
211	211 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
212	212 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
213	213 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
214	214 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
215	215 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
216	216 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
217	217 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
218	218 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
219	219 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
220	220 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
221	221 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
222	222 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
223	223 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
224	224 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
225	225 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
226	226 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
227	227 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
228	228 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
229	229 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
230	230 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
231	231 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
232	232 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
233	233 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
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244	244 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
245	245 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
246	246 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
247	247 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
248	248 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
249	249 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3
250	250 Abbey	107	4.8	13.3

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS

162	Affiliated Collieries	236	-	9	2.0
412	Anglo Siam	104	7	12.5	2.1
301	Anglo Urdu	28	-	-	-
101	Anglo-Persian Oil	8780	+112%	-	-
251	Asiatic Petroleum	28	-	4.8	5.0
9250	Bank 19450	150	+50	-	-
101	Bank of India	100	-	5.5	7.3
115	Bank of China	1345	-	5.5	7.3
115	Bank of China	1345	-	5.5	7.3
115	Bank of China	1345	-	5.5	7.3
115	Bank of China	1345	-	5.5	7.3
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115	Bank of China	1345	-	5.5	7.3
115					

Further appeal delays forecast

Annual Review of the Legal Year 1991-1992
Unless measures were taken, such as the extending the requirement of leave to appeal and increasing the number of Lord Justices, litigants would suffer further delays in the disposal of appeals.

Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, sitting with Lord Justice Goff and Lord Justice Slynn in the Court of Appeal, stated on November 16 handing down the review of the legal year.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS opened his review with a tribute to the imagination, managerial skills and willingness to innovate which his predecessor, Lord Donaldson of Lynton, had brought to bear on the administration of the court.

During his decade in office the organisation and administration of the court were greatly improved in large measure as a result of his personal attention.

However, the pessimistic prognosis given in his last review (The Times November 28, 1991) had been borne out.

With regard to appeals: the period 1991-1992 revealed a relatively gradual but very steady increase over the period in the number of appeals outstanding at the end of the legal year. In 1991 the number had been 1,135, in 1992, 1,214. The number of appeals disposed of had dropped from 1,532 in 1990-1991 to 1,515 in 1991-1992.

The decline in the number of appeals disposed of was of some concern. It seemed likely that a contributory factor over the years had been an increase in the weight of appeals and therefore in the time taken to hear and dispose of them.

While it was not easy to quantify weight and complexity, figures showed that the court had found it necessary to reserve judgment, a course usually adopted in more difficult and complex cases, in 29.87 per cent of cases, whereas the figure in 1985-1986 was 15.18 per cent.

The average time lag, the lead time, between setting down an appeal and its disposal varied according to the type of appeal. While delays had increased in some classes of appeal there had been a degree of overall shortening.

There had, however, been a marked increase in the number of appeals which had to be heard with great urgency if the outcome were not to be academic only.

The court made every effort to hear such appeals promptly and usually succeeded in doing so. But such appeals brought down the average lead time very substantially.

The increase in such cases had had an effect on the figures, so that while the number of appeals in the period 1991-1992 was 1,214, the number of appeals disposed of had dropped from 1,532 in 1990-1991 to 1,515 in 1991-1992.

His Lordship said that overall most appeals were unsuccessful: 72.1 per cent as opposed to 27.9 per cent which succeeded.

The success rate of appeals was markedly higher where leave to appeal was required. That was not surprising since leave would be granted in cases where the judge considered that the prospective appellant had arguable grounds of appeal.

It seemed clear that the requirement of leave to appeal was a valuable means of weeding out appeals with no realistic prospect of success.

With regard to applications, the volume of work was that in 1992 1,403 applications were disposed of as opposed to 1,377 in 1991. But the number of applications set down in 1992 was 1,648 as opposed to 1,376 in 1991. However, until the past year increases in the number of applications disposed of roughly matched increases in the number of applications set down.

Throughout the legal year three Lord Justices had sat in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division and two in the Divisional Court. At any time therefore the judicial strength of the Civil Division was reduced by five.

One member of the court was engaged on an enquiry lasting virtually the whole of the year. Two Lord Justices acted as deputy chief justice and senior presiding judge while others had duties connected with security and judicial studies. All such duties reduced their available time for

sitting in the Civil Division.

The court had no control over the number of actions brought or the number of dissatisfied parties who wished to appeal. If that number stayed at its present level, and still more so if it increased, the outlook was bleak.

From ending into the backlog of cases, the court was losing ground, and the backlog was growing, with the inevitable consequence of increased delay for litigants.

There would appear to be only three ways of reversing that trend:

1 To increase the number of cases heard by the court. That meant reducing the time spent on each appeal, or on some appeals. Steps had already been taken in that direction by pre-reading, and skeleton arguments. Further steps were under consideration.

2 To reduce the number of appeals by extending the present requirements for leave to appeal. Experience suggested that that could be done with a minimal risk of excluding appeals with any chance of success.

3 To increase the number of Lord Justices.

The latter two considerations were for political not judicial decision. It seemed unlikely that the problem could be solved by adoption of any single course in isolation. It seemed that some combination of all three could alone offer the hope that the present disquieting trends could be reversed.

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Limit on power to hold inquest

Regina v Poplar Coroner, Ex parte Thomas (Doris)
Before Lord Justice Dillon, Lord Justice Farquharson and Lord Justice Simon Brown
(Judgment December 15)

There was no general discretion in the Coroners Act 1988 or elsewhere for a coroner to hold an inquest in any circumstances in which he considered it to be in the public interest that an inquest should be held.

Accordingly, where the medical evidence showed the deceased, a lifelong asthmatic sufferer, died from a prolonged asthmatic attack such an inquest was a natural cause of death and not an unnatural death within section 8(1)(a) of the 1988 Act, notwithstanding evidence to the effect that had the deceased been taken to hospital in time before cardiac arrest she would not have died.

The Court of Appeal so held in *Regina v Poplar Coroner, Ex parte Thomas (Doris)*, against the decision of the Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Tudor Evans) (The Times April 22, 1992; [1992] 3 WLR 485) which had allowed the application of the deceased's mother for judicial review and granted an order of mandamus for an inquest to be held.

Mr Terence Coghlan for the coroner; Mr Edward Fitzgerald for the applicant.

LORD JUSTICE DILLON said that the deceased was aged 17 when she died on April 9, 1989. After a severe attack at about 10.30am on an initial, abortive call to the ambulance service, no ambulance arrived until about 1.33am, but she had stopped breathing a few moments before. At the hospital attempts to resuscitate her were abandoned at 1.55am.

The pathologist's report, ordered by the coroner, gave the cause of death as *status asthmaticus*, a prolonged asthmatic attack, and other evidence indicated that she would not have died if she had arrived at the emergency department before cardiac arrest and even if she had arrived within five minutes of such arrest there was a good chance of survival.

The family were naturally very concerned at the failure of the ambulance to arrive in time.

Since there was no dispute as to the cause of death and none of the alternatives in section 8(1) of the 1988 Act, setting out the circumstances in which it was mandatory to hold an inquest, was remotely relevant, the only basis on which an inquest could be held would be if it could be said that, because of the ambulance's late arrival, there was reasonable cause to suspect the deceased died an unnatural death.

His Lordship accepted the coroner's argument that "unnatural" in section 8(1) should be given its ordinary meaning; there was no context to suggest that its use there was in any unusual sense.

Instances of non-violent deaths which were none the less to be regarded as unnatural included those who died of industrial illness. In such cases the court was told an inquest was always held. Although the illness took its course leading to death, the inception of the illness was from unnatural causes.

Inquests were invariably held on persons who died of legionnaires disease; it was regarded as "unnatural" that a person should die of an extremely rare disease.

It was suggested that recurrence of delay by the ambulance service in answering emergency calls was a matter of justified public concern, falling within section 8(3)(d), so that an inquest with a jury should be held.

That might be so, but it did not answer the particular question before the court.

It did not follow that every case in which the death occurred in circumstances the continuance of which was prejudicial to the health or safety of a section of the public was necessarily an unnatural death under section 8(1).

It should be remembered that rule 42 of the Coroners Rules (SI 1984 No 552) expressly provided that no verdict should be framed in such a way as to appear to determine any question of criminal liability on the part of a named person or civil liability.

It was not the function of a coroner's inquest to provide a forum for attempts to gather evidence for pending or future criminal or civil proceedings.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that although "unnatural" was not used in any unusual sense, it did not mean that whether or not a particular death was properly to be regarded as unnatural was a pure question of fact.

Even ordinary words could have more than one usual sense and the question of differing applications depending on the particular context.

His Lordship did not find the question of causation in the present context susceptible of the approach of the House of Lords in a very different context, in cases such as *McGhee v National Coal Board* (1973) 1 WLR 1 and *Wilsher v Essex Area Health Authority* (1988) AC 1074, where the possibility of there being more than one cause was immaterial.

It was true that the scope of what a coroner's inquest could achieve by way of a formal result had gradually been whittled down over the years, but merely because the coroner's inquest might nowadays be thought lacking any very clear or cogent role was no sufficient reason for adopting too narrow an approach to section 8.

In the present case the coroner was entitled to reach the conclusion that he did and he could not be criticised for regarding the late arrival of the ambulance as insufficiently causative of death to alter its essential character.

Solicitors: Hempsons, Deighton Goadalls.

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THEATRE page 24
Leonie Mellinger as
Princess Flavia in a
bright new production of
The Prisoner of Zenda

ARTS

OPERA page 25

Alec Guinness in The
Ladykillers, a classic
British film now turned
opera in Prague



JAZZ: Clive Davis on the uneasy partnership of hot music and cold technology since the first jazz records, 75 years ago

Swinging was not always so groovy

The year is 1917. Chaplin is playing the fool in *Easy Street*. Scott Fitzgerald is still five years away from publishing *Tales of the Jazz Age*, and in a studio in New York five white musicians from New Orleans, led by an astute cornet player and self-publicist called Nick LaRocca, are playing a tune called "Livery Stables Blues".

The Original Dixieland Jazz Band was already the most talked-about group in the city, thanks to the success of a residency at a fashionable Broadway restaurant. When "Livery Stables Blues" went on sale a few days after the Victor recording session, the band became a national sensation. More than a million copies were sold, at 75 cents a time, and jazz (or "jass" as some people referred to this newcomer, named after lubricious goings-on in the boudoir) was on the way to becoming the country's latest craze.

LaRocca, always quick to cash in, took to calling himself the "Columbus of jazz", to the chagrin of many black musicians. In reality, the form had emerged some years earlier without the assistance of the ODJB and its publicity machine. The early recording companies, however, had been slow to respond, and it was left to LaRocca to make history by putting jazz on record for the first time. The results, a cheerful amalgam of ragtime and blues, can be heard on a new compilation album, *ODJB: The 75th Anniversary* (RCA Bluebird NID-90650).

In a sense the notion of putting jazz on record is a contradiction in terms. A jazz performance is supposed to be spontaneous, not an artefact to be regurgitated note for note, year in year out. In the clinical atmosphere of the studio it is hard to re-create the exuberance and dynamism of a live performance in front of a sympathetic audience. Musicians tend to regard the whole business as a necessary evil.

Even so, where would we be without all the discs and the miles of tape? Classical music scholars may argue over the precise interpretations of a Mahler symphony, but they at least have a manuscript to work from. The best jazz — the inflections, the tone, the relationship between rhythm section and soloist — cannot be set down on paper with precision. How would you reproduce the personal imprint of Bix Beiderbecke or the torrential creativity of Charlie Parker?

As it is, there are huge gaps in the edifice. A sizeable chunk of early bebop, for instance, is missing due to a recording ban imposed by the American Federation of Musicians during the second world war. As for

'Jazz is supposed to be spontaneous, not an artefact to be regurgitated note for note'

the first legendary figure in New Orleans jazz, the cornet player Buddy Bolden, no recording exists.

Bolden was at his peak around the turn of the century — one of the more unlikely tales about him was that, on certain nights, his playing could be heard miles away. A heavy drinker, he suffered a breakdown in 1906 and spent the last 25 years of his life in a mental institution.

According to one rumour, he made a cylinder recording as far back as 1894, but none has ever been found. Now he exists only in tall tales, a handful of scholarly tracts and Michael Ondaatje's suitably fragmented novel *Coming Through Slaughter*.

Bolden's successor, Freddie

Keppard is said to have spurned the opportunity to beat the ODJB to the studio. He was supposedly approached by Victor's staff in 1916, but sent them packing. "Nothin' doin' boys," he told his bandmen. "We won't put our stuff on records for everybody to steal." The next great New Orleans cornet player, Louis Armstrong's mentor Joe "King" Oliver, fared somewhat better in terms of recordings. Even so, his band did not cut its first disc until 1923, when he was in his late thirties. Tracks such as "Dipper Mouth Blues" are now recognised as classics, yet there is a widely held view that Oliver's best years were already behind him by this time.

Once the record industry got into its stride, technology played a major role in the development of the music — so much so that *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* now devotes more than a dozen pages to the subject. Early studio technology imposed many constraints, the most obvious of which was the three-minute playing time of 78 rpm discs. 1920s equipment also had trouble coping with the booming sound of the drums, so drummers were often confined to the use of the rims or wood blocks.

In the post-war years the advent of the LP and tape editing gave musicians and producers greater freedom. But the sophisticated techniques that are part of every pop star's armoury have not become standard practice, except amongst jazz-rock musicians, partly because of the sheer expense of long sessions in the studio. There is also the feeling that too much technology can get in the way of good music.

Randy Brecker, one of the top fusion musicians of the past 20 years, has pointed to the problems that can arise: "My generation is used to overdubbing and not recording live. Musicians have separate booths and headphones in



Already past his best? King Oliver (standing at the rear, centre) and his Dixie Syncopators in 1925. Hulton-Deutsch Collection

the studios. As a result, people tend to overplay and play loud."

How true. The truth is that some of the finest recordings of the past 40 years were made in a living room in New Jersey — at the home of Rudy van Gelder, the celebrated engineer for such labels as Blue Note and Prestige. During the 1950s van Gelder (an optometrist by day) recorded at his parents' home in Hackensack, setting up a control booth next to the room where the musicians were playing.

Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Horace Silver all made superb albums there. Today, Van Gelder remains the doyen of engineers, capable of producing an extraordinarily warm, velvet sound. Generations have been won over to jazz simply by that ambience, one which gives the listener the impression of having the best seat in the world's best jazz club.

Meanwhile, an army of technicians and producers is busy salvaging the past. With the advent of

compact discs and digital technology in general, record companies have been quick to meet the demand for vintage albums shorn of their snap, crackle and hiss.

The ODJB set is one of many to be put through a computerised system which removes imperfections and surface noise. But even this laudable project has aroused controversy, with the best-known freelance exponent of the clean-up process, the Australian engineer Robert Parker, claiming that the

major labels have used the technology indiscriminately, with serious consequences for the clarity and balance of the original recordings.

Parker has spoken of his fear that cost-conscious executives may eventually decide to sell the original metal master discs for scrap, leaving only the distorted CD versions for posterity. Like musicologists arguing over fortepianos and "authentic" violins, the experts may yet face a long debate over the real sound of jazz.

TELEVISION REVIEW: Richard Morrison on Peter Greenaway's latest

Watch out, the Beagle's about

No doubt about it: Peter Greenaway made a fascinating programme about *Darwin* (Channel 4). I know, because by squinting hard, moving the armchair to within three feet of the screen and turning the brightness knob full up, I could watch it from start to finish. Well, not quite from the start. I also spent a little time fruitlessly twiddling the "vertical hold" button, before it struck me that the big black areas across the top and bottom of the screen were intentional. Arty, I suspect.

But the thought did occur that perhaps Greenaway is not a natural television director. Those lovingly composed tableaux, each one reflecting a different aspect of the great evolutionist's life and times — 18 in all, with bonding and feasting given as much prominence as species-originating — would probably look impressive on a big cinema screen. The play of light and shade across the assembled genitals

could then be applauded as richly symbolic.

Reduced to a murky, four-inch-deep band, however, the programme evoked only the antics of a slightly dodgy Victorian sketching-club observed through a letter-box.

Of course, making the viewer feel like a voyeur was part of Greenaway's plan. We were intruders spying on the tableaux, just as Darwin observed the natural world from the decks of HMS Beagle.

Hence, too, the weird commentary. While undeniably saying much about the social and scientific climate in which Darwin lived, it also lost no opportunity to signpost the artifice of the film-making in sentences of comic verbosity, presumably meant to parody Darwin's own writing. Such as: "This is not an exact reproduction of Darwin's study but an imaginary composite mid-19th century working place which may reproduce in es-

Darwin Channel 4

sence all the scholarly working-places of

mid- or late-19th century figures who were Darwin's actual or near contemporaries: Marx, Dickens, Prince Albert, Shaw, H.G. Wells, Tolstoy and even Freud. "You mean they all lived in four-inch-wide boxes?"

With Greenaway's work, however, you either enter into the spirit of unravelling a riddle to find a paradox wrapped in an enigma, or you dismiss the whole exercise as the farrago of a self-important poseur. Personally, I favour unravelling, if only because it would be a dull old world if nobody attempted anything pretentious.

And this programme's central paradox was vintage Greenaway. Darwin might have rocked conventional religion with his theories, might have removed from humanity all comforting illusions about soul, conscience and fixed

moral codes, and might be regarded as a pillar of rational atheism. But this film undercut that notion by making biblical allusions at every turn.

First the long-bearded Darwin was likened to "Moses coming down from the mountain, with new commandments". Then he actually played God in the tableau depicting the Genesis myth. And finally Greenaway posed this question: since humans no sooner understand something than they start to destroy it (for instance, much of the wildlife observed by Darwin from the Beagle), aren't such scientific "advances" exactly the reason why God warned Adam not to touch the Tree of Knowledge?

So Darwin either proved there is no divine purpose in our universe, or the opposite. Greenaway took an hour to make this point. He could learn something about concision from another film-maker, Luis Buñuel, whose celebrated quip — "I'm still an atheist, thank God!" — really says it all.

Take your partners or take your leave

LONDON City Ballet, the enterprising troupe founded by Harold King 14 years ago, is expected to merge with English National Ballet in the new year. It is believed that King will then take control of a new national touring company which will operate under the ENB umbrella. Some of LCB's dancers and key members of its staff are likely to go with King to ENB: the name of the new touring group is apparently still under negotiation. Such a move could guarantee that the financially-strapped London City Ballet, which has built up an enthusiastic public in the regions, would be partially preserved, even if its name is lost.

SO NOW we know what government ministers get up to on Saturday nights. Classic FM's brain-teaser quiz, which mixes current affairs and music in a series of cryptic questions, was won last week by Sir George Young. The housing minister phoned in with the answers from his car, and won a mug of cham-

ARTS BRIEFING

pagne. If only all the answers came that easily in politics.

Score draws

OPERA fans will be well served with early 19th-century repertoire next year, courtesy of Littlewoods pools magnate

Peter Moores. Two years ago he approached British opera companies with an offer to fund productions of operas from the great era of mad scenes and vocal pyrotechnics. Three companies have taken up his £800,000 gift. Opera North is premiering its new production of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* at Leeds on May 1; while at Welsh National Opera, Donizetti's *La Favorita* is to be dusted down and staged, opening in Cardiff on March 5. That production will also

travel to the Royal Opera House, the first time this opera will have been seen at Covent Garden for more than 60 years. Scottish Opera has opted for more familiar fare: Bellini's *Norma*, which will open in Glasgow in April.

Last chance...

FANS of the Glaswegian band Del Amitri will doubtless raise the roof when their heroes round off a conspicuously successful year on home turf at Barrowlands, Glasgow (041-226 4679) tonight and tomorrow. While hardly the most innovative of groups, Del Amitri are certainly one of the most genuine. More importantly, they have demonstrated a staying power unusual among British rock acts. Their current album *Change Everything* — a relaxed and appealing blend of Seventies retro-rock — peaked at No 2 earlier in the year, and after a gruelling tour they are at last making inroads in America with a hit single "Always The Last To Know".



Moving on? Kim Miller and Conor O'Brien, of London City Ballet, to be merged with English National Ballet

RITZ VIDEO

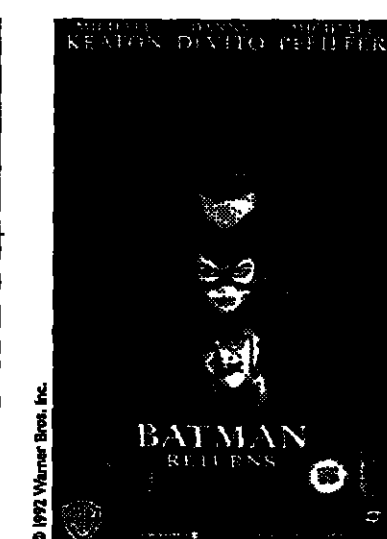
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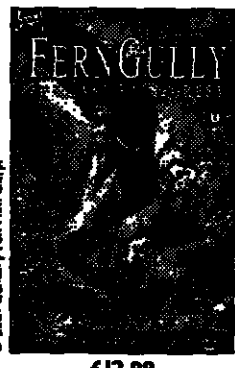
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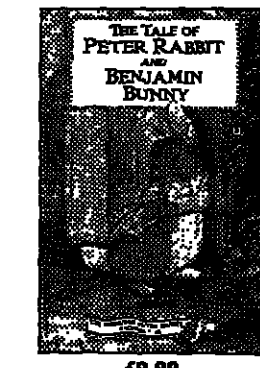
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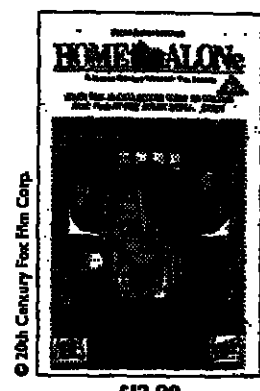
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LONDON

CHERNOBELIA The Royal Ballet's Christmas treat, based on the classic fairy tale, with music by Prokofiev and choreography by Frederick Ashton including the Ugly Sisters' pas de deux. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS Ian Judge's subtly funny production, with award-winning Director of Music playing both parts. With colorful costumes and sets created by designer Mark Thompson. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

HANSEL AND GRETEL David Pountney's nostalgic but understated production is reworked at English National Opera. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

ANNE GET YOUR GUN Irving Berlin's pre-1930s musical is no model for a New Year's Eve party but the songs are simply smashing. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

ASSASSINATIONS Jonathan Miller's sharp and successful musical explores the impact that drives no-hopers to kill American Presidents. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

BARNUM Enchanting Christmas treat, with Paul Nicholas leading the high wire. Bournemouth by Cy Coleman and Michael Stewart. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

CAROUSEL Joanna Pading and Michael Hayden star in a triumphant revival of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway musical. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

THE GIFT OF THE GOBOLIN Peter Shaffer's latest: bloodthirsty revenge versus love. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

HAY FEVER Very funny, performed not always where you expect. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Anna Corio, Hannah Gordon and Martin

TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Heather Aitken

COURTNEY PINE With an increasingly varied repertoire ranging from reggae to jazz standards, the versatile singer showcases her

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE The year's excursion to Narnia, by courtesy of Vanessa Ford Productions. Somewhat better than others in the collection. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01-494 1085/111). Tonight, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm and 7.15pm (closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day).

REGIONAL **OXFORD:** Daydreaming Princess. Poole and Andrews. Tom Ford in

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only
■ Some seats available
■ Seats at all prices

STOW IN WILDE'S "Inland Empire" Melodrama. Some odd assumptions but stylishly done. Stow in Wilde's "Inland Empire".

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN Terrence McNally's production of the play by John Galsworthy. Kiss of the Spider Woman.

LOST IN YONKERS Terrence McNally's production of the play by John Galsworthy. Lost in Yonkers.

MADNESS IN VALENCIA Another Terrence McNally production. Madness in Valencia.

THE GIFT OF THE GOBOLIN Peter Shaffer's latest: bloodthirsty revenge versus love. The Gift of the Gobolin.

HAY FEVER Very funny, performed not always where you expect. Hay Fever.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Anna Corio, Hannah Gordon and Martin

THE PRINCESS AND THE GOBOLIN (U): Blandly animated adaptation of George MacDonald's Victorian classic about a

CURRENT **DEATH BECOMES HER** (PG): Meryl Streep and Goldie Hawn battle to

HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK (PG): More of the same, with

STRICTLY BALLROOM (PG): One dancer's fight to defy the rules of the

THE WOMAN IN BLACK (PG): A chilling tale of a woman who

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THEATRE: Jeremy Kingston enjoys a thrilling adaptation of a classic romantic adventure.

Duels crown a dazzling display

The Prisoner of Zenda
Greenwich

AUTHORS may say they are writing about imaginary countries, Lilliput or Ruritania, but the chances are that these are metaphors for the home country. Anthony Hope put forward a most unconvincing account of how he hit upon the idea for his splendid tale, one which made no mention of any influences closer to home than the grim castle of Zenda or the palace at Strelitz. The future King George V had in fact just replaced his wretched older brother as eventual heir to the throne, and George was a spitting image of his cousin, Tsar Nicholas II. Many a disappointed royal personage must have wished, like Ruritania's Princess Flavia, that his or her spouse could be swapped for a more spirited lookalike.

Everyone involved in the latest dramatisation of this best of all romantic adventures deserves praise for its success. Les Brotherton's set is a grand construction of curving stone steps, invaluable when duels must be fought in Douglas Fairbanks style. Ropes hang at the side ready for a lightning escape, and beyond them rise the snow-capped mountain peaks of Zenda.

Matthew Francis, adapter and director, ingeniously alters the beginning to plunge us at once into the thickest of Ruritania's dynastic struggle. Black Michael, the dying king's bastard, is beating at the door to his father's apartments, clamouring for recognition, and when the drunk Prince Rudolph sides in we quickly grasp the nature of the conflict ahead. Michael (strong performance by Nicholas Gecks) is wrong and reptilian, Rudolph right but rotten.

The action takes place in a dozen different locations, but the adaptation

has the feel and thrust proper to a play, not that of a converted book. Francis adds new lines, comic but witty, and knowing irony takes the place of romantic earnestness. Not all the high-flown declarations are gone. David Haig, playing both the Royal Rudolph and the English gentleman Rassendyll, exclaims, "I love you more than truth or life or honour" and makes this mouthful sound as if it comes sincerely from the heart.

Haig is a warm, cuddly-looking actor, not obvious casting for the role of dashing duellist. We see him first as the puppyish Prince, convincingly the man afraid to be king, but he makes the role of Rassendyll equally his own. There is a well-bred ardour to his courtship of Leonie Mellinger's Flavia, a passionate vigour in his swordplay and, subtly suggested, a nervous wonder at the pageantry of majesty. Mellinger is good at conveying the troubled inability to identify what is not quite as it should be.

Both Prince and Rassendyll appear together in some scenes, requiring the quick removal and restoring of a moustache, managed by cunningly distracting the audience. The fights, arranged by Malcolm Ranson, are exceptionally well done, and Haig's adversary in the most acrobatic of them is Mark Lockyer's handsome, wickedly smiling villain, Rupert of Hentzau, puppyish too but from a killer breed.

Sturdy performances are also given by Michael Cronin's Colonel Sapt and Melanie Jessop's black widow, Antoinette de Mauban. A rousing evening.



Mellinger and Haig: even the high-flown declarations are convincing

CHRISTMAS SHOW: Tony Patrick relishes an evening of old-fashioned Dickensian entertainment

Generous in spirit

A Christmas Carol
Mermaid

HUMBUGS by the hundred and carols by the quire are on offer in this doggedly decent Dickens derivation, which has taken up temporary residence at the sign of the Mermaid, hard by Blackfriars Bridge, an it please your worship. Sorry, but alliteration and archaisms are only to be expected after exposure to this old-fashioned entertainment. The wonder of it is that the presumably computer-games-sated children in the audience seemed, last Monday evening, to enjoy the show almost as much as did the adults.

Ron Pember is credited with the musical adaptation and previously took the role of Scrooge, inhabited this year by Douglas Fielding, who (quoting in *Z Cars* and Sergeant Quirk in *EastEnders*). He makes a splendidly

spiry, utterly believable and vigorously venomous old skinflint. After the depiction of his earlier disappointments in life, when the spirits subject him to this *Is Your Life* routine, you cannot help but feel that any sensitive soul would have retreated into himself in the same way. "Humbug!", particularly when delivered with the relish Fielding displays, begins to sound like a reasoned response to any merry suggestion that life is not a matter of ledgers and frugality.

— Vanessa Ford's company includes a

dozen adults, plus seven children (three teams rotate). They are immaculately drilled and likely to swing into close harmony at the drop of an anvil. The slow-motion movement and ensemble mobbing of Scrooge at various points are powerful, and I was particularly impressed by their very musical rail coach, complete with human horses. All the instrumental music, bar some fiddle playing, is provided by Barry Westcott, playing a grand piano and synthesizer. Apart from Fielding's excellent cen-

tral performance, the women seize their chances to make the best of the rest, from Anna Dawson as a genuinely affecting Mrs Cratchit and a preposterous Mrs Fezziwig, to Felicity Duncan as the wildly different trio of Mrs Posset (completely O.T.T.), Belle and Mrs Disher. As the Ghost of Christmas Past and as Belinda, Annabelle Lanyon strikes me as exceptionally good: direct and true. Jonathan Bahar (Monday's Tiny Tim) stayed just on the right side of cuteness.

John Boulter's Bob Cratchit and Ray C. Davis's Fred are so good they have difficulty in remaining likable, but they and Arthur Kohn, Mark Feakins, Rupert Ingham (the fiddle player) and Frank Stirling invest their various roles with rousing conviction.

STEPHEN PETTITT

OPERA: Restoring the music of Monteverdi to its original scale can cause problems in a large auditorium

Saved by a dashing hero

In fact, the number of singers significantly exceeded that for the Ves-

its singers, and the monochromatic nature of voices such as those of Catherine

Bot (La Musica in the Prologue, and afterwards the Messaggiera and Prosperina) and of Andrew King (First Spiritus, First Pastore, Eco and Apollo), however characterful, simply proved insufficiently flexible for the task. Neither was it helpful that, countering Bot's tendency to push the pitch to the sharp side, Julia Gooding, as Euridice, sang with flat tone and, often, pitch.

There were also problems of balance

between voices: most obviously, Simon Grant's Caronte, though rich in quality, stood feebly beside Michael George's Plutone, dark and powerful enough to waken the dead. Chris Robson's Speranza, meanwhile, possessed exactly the right Bowman-like whiteness of timbre.

But to be fair Monteverdi does reserve much of the best music for his hero's role, and here the New London Consort struck gold. John Mark Ainsley brought to Orfeo a fervency, individuality and authority sorely missed elsewhere, single-handedly rescuing what might otherwise have been a dullish evening.

STEPHEN PETTITT

ENTERTAINMENTS

CINEMAS

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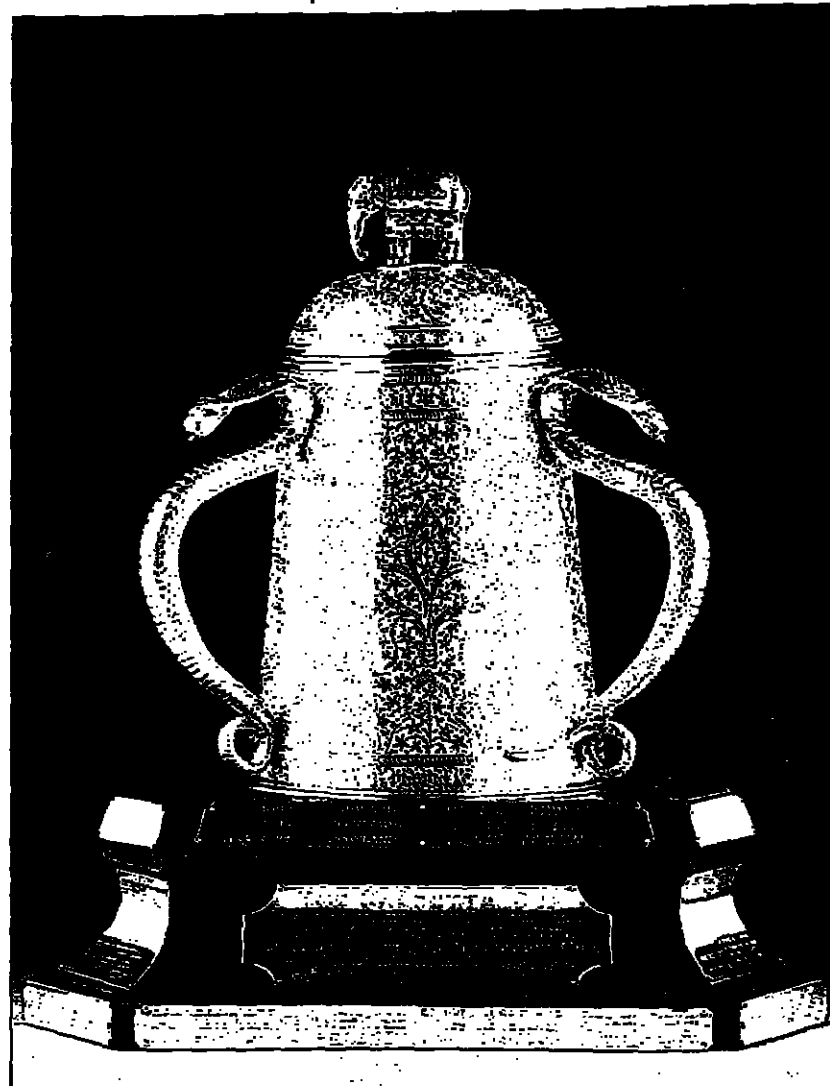
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CINEMA MAYFAIR



Shedding light on the history of design as well as of sport: among the trophies on show at the V&A are (left to right) the Ladies Championship Challenge Plate; the Sir Charles Wakefield Trophy for Maximum Speed; the Calcutta Cup

Cups that we have cheered

The FA Cup, the Ashes, the Ascot Gold Cup, the Schneider Trophy and such are so familiar as concepts that perhaps few stop to wonder what they actually look like, or have more chance to find out than a distant glimpse of presentation in *News at Ten*. In any case, for most sports enthusiasts the physical shape of the prize is immaterial, the glory of winning all.

Nevertheless, the opportunity of seeing virtually every sporting trophy anybody has ever heard of, gathered together in one place, must provoke a little curiosity in even the most spiritual of sportsmen. The Victoria and Albert's show *Sporting Glory*, which offers just such an occasion, should be a surefire attraction for them. It also presents so much gold and silver and silver-gilt that the audience for "treasures" of any origin might be persuaded to turn out. But how about those who go to the V&A primarily for the loftier pleasures of art and design? Nothing much in it, surely, for them?

Ah, well, that could be a grave mistake. How many realise, for instance, that in this show they can actually see the Eglinton Trophy, designed and carried through by friends of Lord Eglinton to commemorate (and presumably comfort him for) the disastrous Eglinton Tournament, rained out in 1837 but nevertheless

the most famous piece of early 19th-century romantic medievalism. The trophy itself, designed in elegant Neo-Gothic style by Edmund Cockerill, stands eight feet high, took four years to make, is of solid silver and cost £1,775 then, which is estimated at over £1 million in modern terms. The effect is staggering even if you have never heard of the tournament (in any case, the catalogue explains it all), and certainly a design landmark of a sort.

Look further back, and there are more intriguing sidelights on the history of design. Take the succession of Richmond Race Cups made between 1759 and 1792. To begin with, they are very early and flouncy and rococo. By the 1790s they are a model of Neo-Classical restraint. As they are displayed, eight of them side by side, one can see tastes shifting and changing. And right in the middle there is the 1766 Richmond Cup, a design specially commissioned from Robert Adam and representing a watershed in the return to true classical feeling. One could hardly ask for a more vivid way

John Russell Taylor reviews a glittering show of cups, trophies and shields created to reward sporting achievements since the 18th century

of making design history spring to life.

One of the curiosities of 19th-century nomenclature is that sporting trophies were almost inevitably known as "cups", whether or not they included anything which could even theoretically contain liquid. Many of these Victorian "cups" were in fact full-bodied, free-standing sculptures, and again it is illuminating to see such as the National Challenge Trophy (for rifle shooting) of 1866, a stirring allegorical composition representing Peace and War to either side of a central pedestal, or the Queen's Cup (1848) which is actually a spirited "Moorish" (actually bull-fighting) scene of a picador charging a bull, designed by Cockerill. He, incidentally, was clearly a resourceful sculptor whose name would

probably be much better known if he had not spent his last 27 years in virtual anonymity as principal designer for Garrard.

Hardly less sculptural are such actual cups for horse-racing as the Beaufort Cup (1866), which features scenes from the lives of Charles I and II surmounted by a figure of John of Gaunt, or the Tennyson Vase, designed by Henry Hugh Armistead with scenes from *The Idylls of the King* in high relief, and shown in the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867. At the end of the 19th century we can see demonstrated another design revolution, with the sudden drastic simplification introduced by C.R. Ashbee and his Guild of Handicraft, where high Victorian ornamentation is replaced by Arts and Crafts

simplicity and the localisation of ornament to a few strategically placed Art Nouveau details, as in the Kennard Jubilee Cup for golf (1902).

The 20th century brings much more stylistic uncertainty. Many of the dullest trophies, hopelessly echoing past glories, date from the last 75 years, as well as, admittedly, some appealingly bizarre extravaganzas, such as the Empire Exhibition Trophy (1938), a silver miniature of the Deco main tower of the exhibition itself. It would be impossible to guess what sport this was intended for (football, as it happens), and in this it falls into a respectable tradition: how would one know that the Calcutta Cup (1878), with two cobras for handles and an elephant on top, is for rugby union, or the Ladies' Singles Championship Challenge Plate (1864), allegorising Temperance, for tennis?

At least with the most funeral of recent designs, John Harwood's De Beer Diamond Day Cup (1991), in grey and white marble, you could guess from the inset

holograms that it had something to do with horses. But then again, you might not wish to know.

One might not hope for too much from very recent design, since the normal conditions of commission tend to drive the artist-craftsmen concerned either into an anaemically tasteful Neo-Georgian, or back irresistibly into the mind-set of the Festival of Britain — possibly because that was the last period at which those legendary men in the street (or the boardroom) felt altogether at ease with the latest design had to offer.

On the other hand, the ascendancy of Deco between the wars was absolutely ideal for the trophy market: especially if what was required had to reflect the idea of speed with a bit of smooth streamlining. The Sir Charles Wakefield Trophy for Maximum Speed, created by Phoebe Stabler in 1929 — there is even a picture of her doing it — has it all: an allegorical winged figure flinging herself into action as draperies stream out behind, all in gleaming gold. Great art or not, the conviction of the design is unmistakable.

● *Sporting Glory*, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, SW7 (071-589 6371), Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, Sun noon-5.30pm, until February 14 closed tomorrow, Friday and Saturday. Sponsored by Courage. Admission £4.95, concessions £3.50.

What's Czech for Ealing comedy?

That 1955 British film classic, *The Ladykillers*, has just been staged in Prague — as an opera. Report by Philip Kemp

Alec Guinness, smaggle-toothed and sepulchral, looms up at the door of a rickety little house near St Pancras Station. "Mrs Wilberforce? I understand you have rooms to let."

The film is *The Ladykillers*, Alexander Mackendrick's 1955 black comedy, in which Guinness and his gang of ruthless but accident-prone crooks are destroyed by the staunch Victorian values of one little old lady. But *The Ladykillers* isn't just the last of the great Ealing comedies. It is also probably the only British film ever to be turned into an opera.

Around 1960, when the film reached Prague, it was seen by the Czech composer Ilja Hurník. Hurník, then in his thirties, had composed plenty of orchestral and chamber music, but had never hit on the right subject for an opera. "I knew I wasn't heroic enough to write a tragic drama — neither did I feel lyrical enough for a fairy-tale, nor funny enough for an opera buffa."

"Then one day I went to the cinema, and found my heroine there. I liked the story because in it good triumphs over evil, without any rattling of sabres or heroes swelling with pride."

Working to his own libretto, Hurník remoulded the film into his first opera, *Dama a lupidé* (*The Lady and the Robbers*). A hit at its 1967 premiere in Plzeň, it enjoyed several revivals in Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

And with the latest production, amid the baroque splendour of the National Theatre in Prague, the English connection has been re-established. The revival has been mounted as part of the English National Opera's Baylis outreach programme, with an English team in charge: director David Sulkin and designer Bethia Jane Green.



Rather than distorting the spirit of the original film (above), Ilja Hurník's operatic treatment of *The Ladykillers* (below), is a beguiling blend of Czech absurdism and English suburban Gothic



long time ago — and now it is yours, to do what you like with." Sulkin and Green decided to reintroduce some of the ultra-English detail of the original film, elements of its world of doily superannuated Victorianism. Green's set design for the house suggests, as Sulkin puts it, "a mixture of a bird-cage, a prison, a

bandstand and St Pancras Station. It's a symbol of the world the old lady was born into, of the empire and the Great Exhibition, all that elaborate, terribly British wrought-iron work."

Inevitably, Hurník's libretto takes liberties with the film's plot. The criminals still pose as a chamber-music group — but there

are only four of them, not five, playing a Haydn quartet instead of the famous Boccherini minuet. The old lady has a neighbour, Mr MacDonald, whom she denounces to the police for mistreating his cat (very English, but with maybe a wary side-glance at the informers of pre-Dubcek Prague). And the police inspector is no bluff Jack Warner type, but a melancholy figure who hates his job, yearning to be home in the paddock with his horses.

But none of these changes distorts the spirit of the film. Rather, Hurník adds a further dimension, creating a beguiling blend of Czech absurdism and English suburban Gothic. The music — written in a modern but highly accessible idiom — is engagingly witty. Sound effects are ingeniously composed into the score: parrots, phone conversations, trains thundering past the ramshackle house, all graphically represented in music.

So will *The Ladykillers* soon be returning, musically enhanced, to Britain? Hurník may be little known over here (undeservedly so, if this opera is anything to go by), but enough people know and love the film to ensure an audience. As yet there are no plans for a transfer, but Sulkin is optimistic.

"It could be an appropriate project for quite a number of companies, not only English National Opera. There's this great upsurge of interest in opera just now, and here's an ideal, commercially viable project all ready to go. It's not a musical pretending to be opera — it's a real opera, but with great popular appeal. Given a good translation, it might even run in the West End."

RADIO REVIEW: Updike reads Updike, and other Gothic tales

There are a lot of short stories being told on BBC radio this Christmas — an excellent use of the airwaves — and one of the best so far has been John Updike's *The Afterlife*, read by the author himself (Radio 3, Saturday). Updike was in England during the great storm of 1987, and used the experience in this story.

An American couple, fiftyish, come to visit another American couple who are living in a cottage in Norfolk. Updike knows his England so well, yet can still catch the American surprise at things English.

The turning point in the story is when the visiting husband, Carter, falls down the stairs in the darkness on the first night, unable to find the "toggle light". He thinks he is going to be killed, then finds himself standing upright on the landing, apparently saved by the newel post.

The next day the intrepid hostess takes them out driving round the countryside, in spite of the mounting gale. Carter watches curious lines of dust being blown up the dry fields, sees the limbs of trees strewn across roads: the earth seems to

Storms in the ether

have lost its moorings.

But the changes are not just outside him: it is as though, after "putting on wings" as he fell downstairs, he is now leaving his old life behind him. When they get back to the cottage his host rushes out, crying "My God, where have you people been?" But Carter is surprised and amused that he does not understand "that they were beyond all that now".

The story uses the gale brilliantly to bring out the transformation in Carter — yet it is always a recognisable English gale (definitely transferred here from autumn to spring). Updike reads the story with easy pace and perfect clarity, unemphatically letting its strangeness take over.

Three talks this week by Philip Dodd are attempting to describe *The Gothic Imagination* (Radio 3). They range from its obvious beginnings in books like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to films such as Hitchcock's *Psycho*. Unfortunately Dodd takes a rather old-fashioned academic approach, tracing recurring themes and supposed influences, rather than asking in any critical way how the monsters and murders serve the purposes of the very different types of tale.

His most interesting quotation is from an Angela Carter story which turns Little Red Riding Hood on its head, with the girl laughing at the wolf, taking off all her clothes and throwing herself at him. Updike could have got a mention, too — "The Afterlife" might be seen as a Gothic tale, making the most subtle use of darkness and mystery, though in my view it does not really help to label it that way.

Actually, the most Gothic thing about these talks is Dodd's heavy, lugubrious voice. I wondered if blood was not dripping from his lips on to his script.

DERWENT MAY

ROCK REVIEW: Alan Jackson joins a happy crowd at a Squeeze concert

Tucking in to salt and vinegar

Although billed as an acoustic evening, the three hours of Squeeze, billed away from conventional notions of guitar-based minimalism and heavily towards the kind of plate-throwing party atmosphere encouraged in certain Greek restaurants. Chris Braides, a young singer-songwriter championed by the top band's Glenn Tilbrook, has material melodic yet thoughtful, which shows him to have a highly original turn of phrase. A debut album is forthcoming.

Following him was a man whose music attracted many adjectives during his 1970s heyday, yet never once "thoughtful" or "acoustic". Roy Wood, originally of The Move, latterly of Wizzard, appears exactly the same at 46 as he did at 26 — largely invisible beneath a mountain of hair and a luxuriant moustache. A fan pointed out excitedly that he and his eccentric band of players and singers ran through close on 20 songs in the course of a 45-minute set, all but one of them Top 20 hits. It would be unseasonably grumpy to say that every one sounded exactly the same, including the sole item of new material — the usual raucous stomper, this time titled "Kiss Me Goodnight, Boadicea".



Squeeze: Tilbrook and Difford are first and second left, front

Squeeze, in a 90-minute set, married the best elements of both preceding acts with a nicely-judged and executed performance propelled by Tilbrook's winning persona and solid but unflashy singing and playing skills. Elements of Braides' quiet lyricism and the picture postcard humour Wood aspires to are combined in old favourites such as "Cool For Cats" and "Up The Junction" — each a rare example of colloquial yet articulate pop song writing, and with a bitter-sweet experience of life

discernible between their respective lines. More recent material proved the enduring worth of Tilbrook's partnership with fellow band member Chris Difford.

That they can fill the (closure-threatened) Town and Country to capacity for three nights running without any recent hits to galvanise the box office says much about the appeal of Squeeze. And that their salt-and-vinegar view of London life kept one of the year's most good-natured crowds rapt throughout, only underlines the point.

Do not let burglars have a merry Christmas at your expense. Nigel Buxton reports



Outwit the opportunist

Christmas may be welcomed by many people as the festive season, but in the eyes of the police and the insurance companies it is also the felonious season.

December and early January normally see a significant increase in domestic burglary. Housewives absent for long shopping expeditions, businessmen and businesswomen staying late for office celebrations, people away on holiday and out at parties, attractive presents conveniently assembled for collection from the sitting room while the householder is having a drink with the people next door: all offer special temptation to potential thieves.

What can the householder do about it? Locks and bolts constitute an indispensable part of the answer according to both the police and insurance underwriters, but there are also a whole range of other recommended measures.

"The battle is psychological as much as physical," says PC Stephen Gooding, the crime prevention officer for Guildford, Surrey. All authorities

agree that most domestic burglaries are not carefully premeditated crimes committed by dedicated professionals; 90 per cent are carried out by "amateurs" aged between 17 and 24 responding to more or less casually perceived opportunity. The typical burglar, says Chief Inspector Peter Seaman, crime prevention officer for Hertfordshire, is aged 14 to 17 and living within a mile or two of the property he or she robs.

"The first principle of security is to minimise opportunity," says Inspector John Houlgate of Scotland Yard, head of a "Secure by Design" team. Inspector Houlgate and colleagues in nine other police forces in the South East are encouraging architects, builders and developers to take more account of security factors. "Blind spots" such as entrance passages and concealed rear areas, ought to be "designed out"; good all-round fields of vision ought to be designed in.

For the householder, the concomitant advice is to make it difficult for a criminal to work without fear of being

seen. Prevent easy access to secluded gardens or patios more than 60 per cent of all domestic break-ins occur at the back of houses. Put him (burglar) at risk by installing lights that are automatically activated after dark by anyone approaching either the front

Of 400 burglaries only two involved houses with alarm boxes

or rear of the premises. Are external, visible alarm boxes worth installing? The police consensus is that they are; even if they do nothing else they may scare off the faint-hearted opportunist, and there are a lot more faint-hearted would-be criminals about than people might suppose. Of 400 burglaries in the Horsham area of West Sussex during the past two years only

two involved houses where an alarm box was visible. "Why risk going for a property that looks as if it's protected when there are plenty that look as if they're not?" says PC Mike Moore, from Horsham police.

There is general agreement, too, about marking property and letting the would-be criminal know that you have done so. The Horsham police say: "If a burglar sees a window sticker saying that anything worth stealing inside has been post-coded with an ultra-violet marker it at least makes that particular place a good deal less attractive than a lot of other possibilities."

"It's very important not to look like a soft touch; to turn your property into what the casual criminal will be likely to consider a bad bet," PC Gooding at Guildford says.

One of the prime precautions is to deter burglars from choosing your house rather than someone else's, according to the criminologist Dr Trevor Bennett of Cambridge University. He reached this view after interviews with convicted burglars. Foremost of all deterrents, he concluded,

was occupation of the house, or a convincing appearance of occupation.

"It stands to reason," says PC Neil Bumford, crime prevention officer for Maidenhead, in Berkshire. "If you're going to burglarise someone's property you're more likely to try and do it when you think they're not there than when it looks as if they're at home." Eighty per cent of burglaries, he says, are committed in daylight, with late afternoon being the criminals' favourite time. Late afternoon is when most people who go out to work have not yet come home and when mothers have gone to fetch the children from school.

Giving the appearance of occupation is easier than it is used to be. Switches that are programmable or light-sensitive can be used to turn the Christmas tree illuminations on and off, seemingly at random. Radios can be controlled by the same means, and a tape recording of a barking dog has been suggested as being useful — conditional upon an understanding with the neighbours.

Leaving the car in the driveway at home instead of in the garage or at the airport when going on a skiing holiday is not recommended by PC Moore at Horsham. One person who did that was not only burgled but lost his Jaguar as well. And of course it is no good programming the lights but leaving the curtains open so that after dusk anyone can see the spot-lit Cézanne over the sideboard or the Fragonard over the fireplace. And remember, "Ladders," says a Home Office advice sheet blandly, "should never be left lying around for use by unauthorised persons." Quite so.

Unlock the property chain with a swap

Fed up with waiting for that elusive buyer? Home exchanges are looking increasingly attractive

What do you do if you cannot sell your home? About 800,000 owners are waiting for that elusive purchaser to walk through the door, according to figures from the Central Statistical Office.

Other people are part-exchanging their houses, thus removing the anxiety of the sale or purchase falling through — the fate of up to 60 per cent of potential transactions at present.

Part-exchange involves finding a suitable property to swap with. Whether you use a specialist part-exchange agency, advertise on your own, or part-exchange your home with a newly built home, the savings can be considerable, in time and effort, wear on your nerves and in stamp duty fees.

With part-exchange, stamp duty is only payable on the difference in the two prices and if that is less than £30,000 there will be nothing to pay.

If you buy from a developer or you will, in most cases, have to buy a property that is more expensive than the one you are selling, but you will not have to pay estate agency fees. If you use a specialist agency, you will have to pay a fee which varies from company to company.

In September, Bristol and West Property Services was the first estate agency group to launch a home exchange scheme. Now Hamptons — also owned by Bristol and West — is operating a similar scheme throughout its network of 98 offices across the south of England.

The Hamptons office in Locksbottom, Kent, has been running part-exchange within its own branch for the past 18 months. Justin Flanagan, Hamptons manager, says:

"We have completed a dozen transactions. It has been particularly successful in the upper price ranges, between £200,000 and £750,000."

Another way to part-exchange is to use one of the specialist companies, although some have folded quickly. One casualty, The Home Owners Exchange, launched in September in Salisbury, found that with only 50 properties on its database, it was not generating the money it had hoped for.

One of the survivors is the National Property Exchange, of Southsea, Hampshire, which has been in

operation for four years.

Peter Jones, its director, says: "We have 16,000 properties on our books and we cover England, Scotland and Wales. The exchange market is totally divorced from the estate agency market, as everyone in exchange is a buyer. We put both ends together and bingo."

The company charges clients £54.60 including VAT to register for a year. They receive an immediate report of what properties suit their needs and this is updated every 28 days. After January 1993 the rate will be £69.

Another company, Home Exchange News, operates slightly differently. Set up in October 1991 by Mike Mitchell, a publisher, it puts out a magazine every 12 weeks containing advertise-

ments from people who want to exchange their home. Private sellers can advertise free for four issues, providing there is nothing commercial about their house. The publication costs £9.99 and the last issue carried details of 1,500 homes. The next issue is due at the end of this month.

The big developers are old hands and have used part-exchange as a successful marketing technique for years. Barrett, which leads the field, has part-exchanged 25,000 properties over the past 21 years. Many other developers run exchange schemes. Gilly Greenfield, New Homes Marketing Board's spokeswoman, says:

"Over the past few years part-exchange has been the most popular of all housebuilders' purchaser incentive schemes."

Most developers insist that the house you are buying must be worth more than the one you are selling, 30 per cent more in the case of Wimpey, 25 per cent with Barratt and a minimum of £30,000 difference for a Countryside Homes property. Chris Crook, sales and marketing director, says that "65 per cent of their customers are 'trading-in' their old homes for new ones".

Whether buying old or new, it could be worth getting up and pursuing a part-exchange deal rather than waiting for what could be an increasingly elusive buyer.

MARY WILSON

● National Property Exchange, PO Box 172, Southsea, Hampshire PO5 1EN. Telephone 0705 838800. Home Exchange News, 261A East Barnet Road, East Barnet, Hertfordshire, EN4 8SX. Telephone 081-447 0014.



All change: Alan Farley (above) outside the home he is exchanging for the Jacksons' house (below)



Holding on to our heritage

Surely it is not possible to strip your own assets? An odd notion, indeed, but the idea of homeowners doing just that lies at the heart of a report from the Victorian Society. It highlights the legality of removing architectural features from listed buildings.

In theory, a listed building is protected not only against demolition but against change. Listed Building Consent must be obtained from the local authority if anything is to be altered, and that includes removal of fixtures.

But problems often arise out of the ignorance of owners, and uncertainty over the exact definition of a fixture. Under the 1990 Planning Act, the law should provide blanket coverage via the Listed Building Consent. But the report, entitled *Coming Unstuck: The removal of Architectural Features from Listed Buildings*, looks at several cases to highlight anomalies.

In 1989 a developer removed panelling from an early 18th Century listed house in London's Soho. Although he was prosecuted and fined £14,000 after someone had spotted the panelling in the street it was too late to save it. The developer claimed ignorance of the law.

In another case the owner of Manhead Park in Devon, a listed Gothic Revival house,

The law on listed buildings does not offer complete protection. Do the loopholes need to be blocked?

sold ten statues which had been commissioned for its Long Gallery. The local authority was aware of the sale but decided Listed Buildings Consent was not necessary because the statues were not attached to their plinths and therefore not a fixture.

In a third case, a £50,000 statue of Icarus plunging into a lake at Leighton Hall, in Powys, was removed by its owner to another of his houses. He was fined £500.

The removal of architectural features by owners is only one aspect of an increasing problem. The recession has seen many properties being repossessed. As a result, houses often stand vacant for long periods at the mercy of scrupulous salvagers.

Bretford Manor in Warwickshire is one such property. A Grade II listed house with parts dating from the 14th century, it passed into the hands of receivers earlier this year having been empty for two years. By the time Knight Frank & Rutley were brought in to sell the property, it had been stripped by persons unknown of many features in-

cluding panelling, flagstones and even the main staircase. But this is a story with a happy ending. A buyer has been found, and many of the features have been recovered and will be reinstated.

In some cases there can be problems proving that fixtures came from a particular property. Simon Gordon Duff, of Knight Frank & Rutley, who dealt with Bretford Manor, believes that owners of listed buildings should "photograph any special features so that if anything disappears, it can be easily traced".

So what can be done to stop the problem? Teresa Sladen, secretary of the Victorian Society, has been invited to appear before the all-party heritage committee in the spring of next year. She will be encouraging the environment department to provide more information to owners which clearly states their responsibilities to listed buildings.

She will also be pressing for laws to be clarified. In particular the Victorian Society wants local authorities to be able to issue Stop Notices to prevent any removal of fixtures until

an enquiry can be held, and to stop retrospective consent being granted.

English Heritage has another approach. Peter Davies, who is coordinating its response to what he described as "an enormous problem", believes in self-regulation.

In conjunction with the Council for the Prevention of Art Theft, a newly-formed group, English Heritage is setting up a code of practice for dealers in architectural fixtures. The groups are also looking to establish a Certificate of Provenance for goods over a certain value.

Sometimes, however, the law as it stands does provide the necessary protection. Earlier this year an environment department inspector ruled that several statues could not be removed from the garden of Thoresby Hall in Nottinghamshire, a Grade I listed house. These were not fixed and were outside but the decision was based on their setting and the length of their association with the house. The environment secretary endorsed the decision.

With such enlightened decisions and the actions being recommended by concerned groups, it is possible that listed properties will not end up for sale in bits on the high street.

JAMES FISHER

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RELOCATION

The young switch off

New figures show that newspapers may be aiming at a lost generation.

Harold Lind reports

There was a cold war joke that the optimist learnt Russian, the pessimist Chinese. The vagaries of politics have rendered that particular thought obsolete, if only temporarily, but a rather similar mood envelops the national press. The optimist believes that the present frightening trend in sales will not get much worse over the next few years. The pessimist believes it will.

The atmosphere is summed up by the introduction to a conference to be held in February by *Admap*, the magazine for thinking people in the media (hence its small circulation): "The hitherto unshakable ramparts of national newspapers' stability are shaking. Total national daily sales that have stood at about 15.5 million for 25 years are now a bare 14 million and weakening."

One cannot argue with the figures, but they are open to complex and conflicting interpretations. Since we began with optimism and pessimism, consider them from the viewpoint of our optimist and pessimist. The optimist will accept that the circulation fall, particularly in national dailies, is greater than anything in the last 20 years. But he will point out that there is always some decline during economic depression, although admittedly usually of between 2 and 4 per cent, rather than 8 or 9. However, he will argue that this depression is deeper and longer than anything since the 1930s, so it is not surprising that circulation losses would also be greater.

If so, the position for the nationals is unpleasant, but not disastrous. The slump will end some day, perhaps even next year, and circulations will then stop falling and might even start rising closer to 1990 levels.

The pessimist on the other hand will see the depression as, at most, a trigger

Age group	1987 (%)	1992 (%)	% change
15-24	69	60	-13
25-34	66	55	-17
35-44	67	58	-12
45-54	72	64	-11
55-64	70	64	-9
65+	63	63	0
All adults	68	60	-12

for a more fundamental change. He will argue that the basic reasons that persuaded people to buy newspapers are beginning to erode. An educational system that increasingly seems to regard reading for pleasure as an optional extra and that always seems to place the word "computer" before "literacy" might encourage the sale of computer games, but is hardly likely to do much for newspaper sales.

With one exception, a major slump hits all age groups roughly equally. Our great educational revolution got into its stride only in the 1970s or at the earliest the late 1960s so nobody over 35 is likely to be infected. The key age groups will probably be the under 30s.

Unfortunately, the circulation figures cannot be broken down by age, but readership figures can, using the National Readership Survey. The first table shows changes in readership of national newspapers during the past five years, by age group. In total, readership fell by 12 per cent, which is reasonably in line with the known fall in circulations.

There is, however, wide variation between the age groups. People over 65 are reading exactly as much as they

used to. This gives only limited evidence, since the one group a recession scarcely touches are the retired who have no jobs to lose, but equally they are the people who are absolutely exempt from modern educational practices. All other age groups are reading significantly less, but it is noticeable that the proportional loss increases as the age level falls. The 55-64 group reads 9 per cent less, which may be largely attributed to the slump, but the 25-34s show almost double that fall.

Even the fact that the youngest group, the 15-24s, shows a smaller loss than the next older group is quite explicable because many of them will still be living with their parents and therefore will probably "look at" the newspapers their parents buy.

For Sunday readership, the pattern at first sight looks surprisingly different from the daily pattern and the circulation figures. It also looks much more helpful, but I fear this is an illusion.

The difference between readership and circulation simply means that households that used to buy several Sunday papers now buy fewer. The difference in age pattern between Sundays and dailies is more interesting

Age group	1987 (%)	1992 (%)	% change
15-24	75	72	-4
25-34	72	69	-4
35-44	73	68	-7
45-54	78	73	-6
55-64	78	73	-6
65+	69	67	-3
All adults	74	70	-5

and makes an important point. Since 1987, no new dailies have survived, but two new Sundays, the *Independent* and the *Sport*, have.

Any new title depends heavily on young readers. Journalists believe this is due to their trendy writing, although it has more to do with the age pattern of home deliveries versus newsstand sales. Whatever the cause, the result is that the two new titles have boosted the younger readership figures, although not enough to give either a powerful market presence.

So where does this leave our attempt to judge between the optimistic and pessimistic view of the circulation decline? Clearly, some of the fall must be ascribed to the slump. The difference between the working and non-working population makes that clear. But the behaviour of the 25-34s looks threatening, particularly since just about every newspaper has been trying to appeal to that age group.

If their resistance to buying newspapers continues after the economic recovery, the future for the press will look bleak. As the old *Daily Herald* was fading, the joke went that whenever a horse passed you, you raised your hat and said, "The *Herald* has lost another reader". Some people may find it less funny in future every passing horse diminishes the readership not of one but of all newspapers.

SELLING POINT

A little of what you fancy, for a bit more

One of life's little enigmas, about which the chattering classes love to chatter, is why, when it comes to shopping, doesn't everyone behave as sensibly as they do? Why do so many housewives continue to buy the pricey manufacturers' brands when Sainsbury, Safeway and Tesco offer the same things so much cheaper?

During a recession, the chattering continues. You would think nobody in their right mind would pay 73p for Fairy liquid when Sainsbury's equivalent is 63p, and that nobody would pay 14p extra for Kellogg's rather than Tesco corn flakes or waste 11p on Andrex toilet rolls when Safeway's would be softer on the purse.

Yet they do. And even more surprisingly, the latest data from Nielsen, the leading consumer sales research company, shows that retailers' brands have not increased their overall share of the market one iota during the last year.

Nielsen's sales figures, based nationally on 64 different grocery products, show that retailers' own brands account for 23 per cent of the total, and have been static at that level — notwithstanding their bargain prices — for ages.

But this 23 per cent average masks considerable variation from product to product — and these variations go a long way towards explaining why housewives do not always behave as economists and the chattering classes think should. They do not, in other words,

always buy the cheapest on offer.

In many product sectors, retailers do indeed now rule the roost. Retailers' own products have grabbed more than half the sales of cooking oils, jams and honeys, aluminium foils and dry pasta, to mention but a few.

By contrast, the manufacturers' brands still hold more than 85 per cent of the sales of foods, instant coffee, cooking sauces, canned soups, tissues and detergents.



Winston Fletcher

Why have the retailers made such successful inroads into some product fields but not others? Ad men like me tend to boast (surprise, surprise) that it is thanks to advertising.

So are shoppers being conned, as a recent Office of Fair Trading report implied, into buying more expensive advertised brands, when they could be saving money? During the last decade, there has been a small revolution in marketing, which has passed largely unnoticed by advertising theorists — as well as by the chattering classes.

Ever since the 1950s, it has been increasingly accept-

ed in advertising that the world is full of very similar products which are differentiated from each other only by their advertising and packaging.

The supermarkets are changing all that. In those sectors in which the product formulations were indistinguishable, the supermarkets soon produced their own, equally indistinguishable, substitutes. Naturally, they gave their own offerings lots of their shelf space, and elbowed the manufacturers.

However, in sectors in which manufacturers' brands were really superior, the best the retailers have been able to do is make something not quite so good and sell it a bit cheaper.

This will be instantly confirmed by anyone who has ever brought a jar of their retailers' instant coffee, then watched it linger on the shelf while new consignments of Nescafé arrive and are almost equally instantly despatched.

But in those fields where the quality of retailers' products is truly on a par with those of the manufacturers' brands, the retailers win out.

In the long run, brand advertising cannot consistently sell a duff product. And the truth is — much as admen hate to face it — that nowadays advertising will rarely succeed in selling a parity product for very long.

That is why manufacturers have stopped marketing me-too brands. And that is why housewives are not behaving foolishly when they pay that little extra for what they fancy.



David Elstein: serious damage



Liz Forgan: candidate to win the prestige job of BBC1 controller?



Jonathan Powell: off to Carlton

TV rivals play musical chairs

The scuffle of Gucci shoes in television company offices presages big changes in the executive face of the new structure

Traditionally, every change in the ITV franchises is accompanied by the discreet scuffle of Gucci on carpet. This is the sound of television executives on the move — some are taking juicy jobs with the newly appointed companies, others are moving into their vacated offices and a few are pacing the floor wondering why they did not make it into either of the first categories.

The latest round of ITV changes has been no exception, but as the old and bitter bow out and the new and nervous take over, there have been last-minute appointments, rumours and rulings that may herald bigger changes in the structure of broadcasting than the Thatcherite Visigoths imagined when they set about tearing down the walls of the established order.

The most extraordinary twist of the past week was the Independent Television Commission's decision not to award the franchise for Channel Five to a Thames Television-led consortium. Thames, still reeling from the commission's decision to give its London ITV franchise to Carlton Television, cannot believe this latest low blow. After all, it ended up as the only consortium bidding, once other contenders had decided the CS franchise was a licence to lose money. The commission concluded similarly, but Thames argues that it has been unfairly denied the right to fail — a

basic tenet of a free-market economy and one of the great freedoms of public service broadcasting. The decision has had one intriguing spin-off. Partly because of his growing disillusionment with the arcane workings of the commission, David Elstein — director of programmes at Thames since 1986 and a true believer in public service television — has quit to preside over the programming and scheduling of BSkyB, long viewed by traditionalists as a larger lout in a gentlemen's club.

BSkyB's six channels of sport, news, films and general entertainment reach only 3.5 million homes via satellite or cable, but Mr Elstein believes the service will cause ITV serious damage within five years. Mr Elstein's earliest task will be to rehabilitate Sky One, the underfunded entertainment channel stuffed with American and Australian imports.

From BSkyB's point of view, Mr Elstein's arrival is a neat way of showing the upstart service must be taken seriously. Not only is he the first leading establishment figure to be poached, he has the scheduling skills to make BSkyB compete with

will be to commission everything that sings, dances, tells jokes, asks quiz questions or acts on ITV, but he comes well qualified.

As controller of entertainment at Yorkshire Television, he was responsible for such diverse comedies as *Rising Damp* and *The New Statesman*, together with such more or less comedic dramas as *The Darling Buds of May* and the far-from-funny *A Touch of Frost*.

There is still one round left in this frantic new year game. When the music stops, who will jump into Mr Powell's chair at the BBC? The smart money is on Liz Forgan, director of programmes at Channel 4 and in recent years one of the few commercial television executives to defend the BBC publicly.

Her eloquent pleas for the protection of public service broadcasting have clearly been appreciated by John Birt, who takes over as director general in the new year.

Whether Mr Birt wants Ms Forgan as a direct replacement for Mr Powell or whether he has even loftier plans for her, he would be gaining the services of a woman who has been highly successful at defending the values of traditional high-quality television in a commercial world — and that is exactly the trick the BBC must pull off if it is to survive the century in anything like the form we know today.

PATRICK STODDART

Why News at Ten needs a nightly blockbuster to keep ratings up

Here is a prediction. Some time in the new year, ITN's revamped *News at Ten* will be hailed a great success. After a wobbly start, the pundits will report, Trevor McDonald's gravitas has won the day. The viewers love it, after all.

Why, after the critical first impressions, should there be such a change of heart? Because the ratings for *News at Ten* are about to climb to dizzy heights not seen since, well, since before the relaunch. This prophecy is not based on a sneak preview of the ratings — which are strictly under wraps for the next two weeks — but on a straightforward reading of ITN's evening schedules.

For what determines the ratings performance of news bulletins has very little to do with the substance of the programme itself and almost everything to do with the preceding and following programmes. A high-rating ITV programme which finishes at 10pm invariably passes on a generous audience to *News at Ten*. And a blockbuster feature film which starts before 10pm, then continues after the news will occasionally take ITN into the ratings stratosphere.

The nine to ten-million strong audiences for *News at Ten* this year have not been generated by big news stories, such as Black Wednesday, the general election, or the latest instalment in the royals' saga. The news programme's biggest audiences have all been won by mini-series such as *Jack the Ripper*, or when films like *Die Hard* have been wrapped around *News at Ten* like a peak-time sandwich.

So, for its much-vaunted relaunch on November 9, ITN was at the mercy of ITV schedulers.

Have I got news for you, Trevor



McDonald: a winning streak

Unfortunately, the schedulers were not very obliging: the average ratings for the four weeks after launch simply continued a gentle decline.

In the run-up to Christmas, however, ITN is finally doing the business for *News at Ten*. Last week, it seemed impossible to find a household that was not tuned to *Prime Suspect* on Monday and Tuesday. We can expect nine million for the intervening news on both days.

This week, we have a string of movies: on Monday it was *Alens*, on Tuesday *Heartbreak Ridge* and tonight *Buster*, all punctuated by *News at Ten*. Hence the certain

ratings lift, and hence the victory laurels for our Trevor.

This raises an interesting dilemma. If ratings are virtually meaningless as a measure of programme worth, how can individual channels assess the success or failure of their news programmes against their rivals? This has particular significance for the decision-making process that TV news editors are constantly grappling with — which stories to run and in which order to run them.

This is not just a journalistic conundrum. For three quarters of the population, television is the main source of national and international news; if it is not on the evening bulletin, it simply is not happening. Those editorial decisions can determine on a day-to-day basis what disasters or political crises or famines the rest of us are aware of in far-flung places. They play a crucial role in deciding what the nation thinks about, talks about even cares about.

ITN has been accused of going "downmarket" in its quest for bigger audiences, a process which allegedly involves trivialisation and more domestic stories at the expense of global ones. ITN vehemently denies the charge, saying that changes have been in style not substance. And yet the day after the Prince and Princess of Wales announcement, *News at Ten* led its bulletin with the continuing saga of the royals while the BBC relegated it to number six in the *Nine O'Clock News* running order.

Is this a sign of diverging news agendas from our main news providers? It is only an isolated example, and in the absence of systematic evidence it is impossible to draw firm conclusions. But the new-look ITN is being closely watched by friends and foes alike. If at any time there does appear to be a deliberate trivialisation of its news agenda, the moral of the last few weeks is that it is likely to be a futile strategy. It will not build audiences, and it certainly will not leave the nation better informed.

STEVEN BARNETT

● The author, who works at the Henley Centre, writes on TV news and current affairs programmes for the British Journalism Review.

EVENING BULLETIN AUDIENCES

Weekly average before and after relaunch of News at Ten			
	Week no.	News at Ten (millions)	Nine O'Clock News (millions)
Before	-5	7.9	6.3
	-4	7.7	6.6
	-3	7.0	6.2
	-2	6.6	6.4
	-1	6.8	6.6
After	+1	6.3	6.7
	+2	6.5	7.0
	+3	6.3	6.4
	+4	6.0	6.6

"The crowd are on the pitch. They think it's all over..."

Discover what happened next in The Times Saturday Review, Boxing Day.

Much hot air expended in the Oxford cricket test

OXFORD versus Cambridge, at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology in Oxford. We were playing the game we're best at — talking. What we were talking about was "Sport and Identity". Actually, it was a bit one-sided: I was the only light blue man there. Throughout Michaelmas term, Oxford has hosted a wide-ranging series of seminars embracing "Rugby: implicit meanings", "Female bullfighters", "Social Change and soccer in Zimbabwe", and "Folk and politics in the Hindu Kush". I went there for Dr Perina Werber's tantalisingly entitled paper, "On cricket teams and popular culture: contested social spaces among British Pakistanis".

Norman Tebbit once famously decreed that Test matches were henceforth to be a test of nationality. If you rooted for Pakistan and not England, then you shouldn't be carrying a United Kingdom passport. "On that criterion all British Pakistanis will just have to be sent home," Dr Werber said. I have often expressed similar sentiments to my Australian wife when we clash over the Ashes. "But I am home," she replies, presumably echoing the British Pakistani. I know how she feels: I support West Ham United, but I wouldn't necessarily want to live on Green Street.

Dr Werber wasn't of course recommending mass deportation, but only observing that a sizeable number of British natives, cooking a snook at Walthamstow Man, still don't automatically support the England team. I should think that will include David Gower and rebellious Gowerpiles this winter.

Dr Werber distinguished three "cultural domains" among British Pakistanis: Islam, weddings and cricket. Theology, she argued, was dominated by ascetic old men, matrimony by lusty young women, and cricket by aggressive young men. The conclusion that cricket is a substitute for religion and sex seemed to be correct. And then she brought up Imran Khan, who effectively dislodged the balls from at least the second half of that proposition, adding that the former Pakistan captain has hitherto fought shy of the cultural domain of the wedding. There is something deeply phallic in the ritual of cricket. Playing about with bats and balls is, to quote Dr Werber, a "symbolic practice". Even the vocabulary of the game — with its "prodding" and "bashing" and "maiden" — bears out the connection. I think it was George Bernard

Shaw who said that God invented the game of cricket to give the faithful Englishman a sense of eternity. Most true disciples are convinced that it is all the other way round, that religion and sex are really poor substitutes for cricket and are just a way of passing the time until next season. For British Pakistanis, cricket is "transgressive" according to Dr Werber: a way of contesting the authority of the mullahs, since "to have fun is sinful, and to be sinful is fun". But the 1992 World Cup final between Pakistan and England in Melbourne was more like burning *The Satanic Verses*, an opportunity for brandishing a common Muslim identity.

Dr Werber's Goweresque dab at my question to do with ball-doctoring suggested that she was stronger on the theory of cricket than on recent practice. She disappointed my hopes for a scoop on the uses and abuses of bottle tops, but argued that the issue was "emblematic of the politicisation of cricket". Perhaps cricket never was unpolitical. The hard red ball was just one of the many weapons we used to defend the outposts of Empire, little thinking it would blow up in our faces when the colonies started bowling it back at us even faster. Dr Peter Parkes drew parallels with the polo wars of the Hindu Kush, between headline advocates of Hurlingham rules — imported by the Tenth Hussars in the nineteenth century — and rebel partisans of the ancient game derived from Persia in the fifth century BC. Another theory was kicked



ICC withdraws invitation to former England batsman

Pakistan manage to block Graveney's appointment

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) yesterday bowed to pressure from Pakistan and withdrew its invitation to Tom Graveney, the former England batsman, to act as the match referee for the Test series and one-day internationals between West Indies and Pakistan.

Graveney, 65, was told that the job would be going to someone else following Pakistan's objections to his appointment because of comments he had made five years ago after the bitter on-field slanging match between the then England captain, Mike Gatting, and the umpire, Shakes Rana, during

the Test match in Faisalabad. "They have been cheating us for 37 years and it is just getting worse and worse," Graveney said on television soon after the incident. His cause cannot have been helped by the strained relations between the English and Pakistan cricket authorities following last season's allegations of ball-tampering against the Pakistan bowlers.

"I'm afraid Tom pressed the self-destruction button himself by making those comments," the ICC secretary, Colonel John Stephenson, said. "It is a great shame but he must be asked to stand down. It is quite clear that the stature of ICC referees is growing but they must have the absolute backing of both countries involved in a series. Clearly, Tom does not have that backing from Pakistan."

"There will be many other countries who will give Tom support and we will find him another job," Stephenson said. A replacement for the series in the Caribbean, which includes five one-day internationals and three Tests between March 23 and May 6, is likely to be named within the next two weeks. Phil Neale, like Graveney, a former Worcestershire captain, is to replace Mike Procter

as Northamptonshire's director of cricket. Neale, 38, has agreed a three-year contract and will take up his duties on March 1. The post was left vacant at the end of last season when Procter became South Africa's full-time team manager. Neale said yesterday: "I feel I've still got something to offer in the game, and I was keen to move into cricket management when I finished playing."

Neale, who led Worcestershire to five important trophies, including successive Britannic Assurance county championship titles in 1988 and 1989, is likely to have a wider-ranging role than Procter, according to Steve Coverdale, the Northamptonshire chief executive. "Mike concentrated heavily on first-team matters and Phil will still have a significant input there. But we see it as a vital part of his new job that he develops Northamptonshire's teams of the future."

Neale made his debut as a Worcestershire player in 1975 and was captain between 1982 and 1991, before giving way to Tim Currie. A former professional footballer, he has an honours degree in Russian from Leeds University.

Run of success: the awards keep rolling in for Britain's Olympic athletics gold medal winners, Sally Gunnell and Linford Christie, above. A week after taking out the top prizes from the sports writers' association, Gunnell, the women's 400 metres hurdles champion in Barcelona, and Christie, the 100 metres winner, have been named track athletes of the year by the British Athletic Federation. The winners receive a £2,000 training award from the sponsor, Vauxhall.

thrower, Tessa Sanderson, gained the field athletes' awards, while the team prize was won by Britain's 4 x 100 metres junior men's team. The winners receive a £2,000 training award from the sponsor, Vauxhall.



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Australia drop Jones for Test

Melbourne: Dean Jones was yesterday left out of the Australia team for the second Test match against West Indies. Jones, the Victoria batsman, who was twelfth man for the first Test in Brisbane, has had only three first-class innings this season for scores of nine, 14 and one and was denied the chance to impress selectors this week when a tour match against the West Indians was washed out.

The young leg-spinner, Shane Warne, comes in to the 12 at Jones's expense. Warne impressed against the West Indians in the Australian XI match in Hobart last month and took five wickets for Victoria in his last Sheffield Shield match against Western Australia.

The left-arm pace bowler, Bruce Reid, was not considered for the match because of a shoulder injury and will be replaced by the New South Wales fast bowler, Mike Whitney. Allan Border will again captain the side, resuming the leadership from Mark Taylor, after a hamstring injury ruled him out of Australia's last four one-day matches. The second Test begins at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday.

Mujtaba hits century in Pakistan victory

Brisbane: Asif Mujtaba scored his second unbeaten century of the match to steer the Pakistanis to an exciting five-wicket win over Queensland with four balls to spare at the Gabba yesterday. Set 291 to win the four-day match, the Pakistanis reached their target despite the loss of two early wickets. The left-handed Mujtaba finished 125 not out for a match aggregate to 227. Other important contributions for the Pakistanis were by Saeed Anwar, who made 72, and Inzamam-ul-Haq, 42. Most significant for the Australians was the return to form of the Test captain, Allan Border, out of action in recent weeks because of a leg injury. Border was 116 not out when Queensland declared at 398 for seven in their second innings. (Reuters)

QUEENSLAND: First Innings 280 (M L Hayden 79, T J Barby 53, Murtaza Ahmed 4 for 70).

Tendulkar provides lesson for students

East London: Sachin Tendulkar was the only Indian batsman to take advantage of the relatively easy pickings available when the touring team's three-day match with a South African students XI continued here yesterday (Richard Streeton writes). Tendulkar made a chancesome 131 and, by the close, the Indians were 273 for eight for a first innings lead of 99 runs.

Of those in need of time in the middle, Shastri, Raman and Azharuddin all missed the chance to take useful practice before the third Test match starts on Boxing Day. Manjrekar stayed three hours at the crease for 43, but his timing and confidence seldom looked any better than his done during his recent struggles.

Raman was caught behind, Shastri drove a high catch against Huckle, a leg spinner,

Americans begin to influence Cheshire

By NICHOLAS HARLING

AS a club that had set its stall laudably on an all-English policy, Cheshire Jets went slightly against the grain with a call for foreign reinforcements. Cheshire finished bottom of the Carlsberg League first division last season with only two wins, and were heading that way again after a third of the present campaign. Then, Mike Burton, the coach, decided to recruit two Americans. "Basically, we wouldn't have ended the season," Burton said. "We just weren't competing. It was embarrassing."

As assistant to Kevin Cadle, the England coach, Burton used his best contact to bring in Tyrone Thomas from Buffalo, Cadle's home town. Doug Herring, who came via an agent in New York, has been just as much an asset, or at least he was until seven seconds from the end of the match at London Towers on Saturday.

Then, with Towers hanging on to a 71-70 advantage after leading by 12 points, Herring fouled Andrew Bailey, also committing a technical offence. Bailey sank the four free shots to give Towers a flustered 75-70 success and some revenge for the previous week's National Cup exit in Ellersmere Port.

Cowboys follow Aikman to divisional honours

TROY Aikman passed for 239 yards and three scores and Emmitt Smith rushed for 174 yards and a pair of 29-yard touchdowns on Monday as the Dallas Cowboys clinched the National Football Conference East championship with a 41-17 win over the Atlanta Falcons (Robert Kirley writes).

With 12 victories, three defeats and one game to play, the Cowboys took their first divisional title since 1985. Just three seasons ago, they had a record of one win and 15 losses. They earned a bye for the first round of the play-offs and will host a divisional game on January 9 or 10. Atlanta withered to six wins and nine defeats. Dallas took control in the

Bray ends his year on high note

By PETER DRYAN

A SEE-SAW year of success and disappointment is ending on a high note that Simon Bray, the national road race champion, hopes will prove the foundation to good times in international competition in 1993.

He spent this year racing in France with one aim in mind — winning the British 90-miles road race title at Buxton in September. It was a close-run thing. Bray, 26, from Oakham, crossed the line behind Steve Farrall, his arm raised in protest that he had been obstructed on the run-in to the finish. His objection was upheld, he was champion and Farrall relegated to second place. The season's sojourn in

Bray ends his year on high note

France was a generous act on the part of his employers, Laings, the construction company, who gave him a sabbatical. The bad news came a month after his victory when he accepted redundancy, but, soon after, he was in good spirits when his old club in Limoges, France, offered him a contract to race for them again in 1993.

Yesterday, there came even better news. Bray was put on the national squad and awarded his major international spurs when he was told he is to lead Britain's five-man team in February's two-week Momentan-Rapport Pro-Am tour in South Africa as part of his preparation for the Milk

Bray ends his year on high note

Race. Before the South African tour, Bray will ride a series of city centre races, which he expects "will do me the world of good". His racing weight is just under 10st and, as a light-weight, he should do well in his aim to take the climbing prize in the Milk Race, which starts from Tunbridge Wells in May.

Bray will undergo a series of physiology tests early next month to establish his baseline fitness level and these will be repeated at the end of the tour, so that he can further fine-tune his training and racing programme in France to help coincide with a peak for the challenge presented by the Milk Race.

Black decides matters with a neat sacrifice: 1... Qxh4+ 2 gxf4 Rh3 mate.

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Coventry may issue claim after police statement

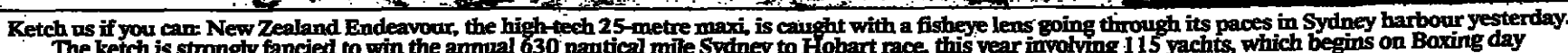
McGorry is Bournemouth's leading scorer this season and is also being watched by Sheffield United and Wimbledon. Bournemouth snapped him up from non-league Weymouth, where he was working in a holiday camp, for £15,000. Middlesbrough watched the powerful McGorry against Reading on Saturday.

River Plate's match started late because police had to use tear gas to clear the pitch. The referee, Juan Bava, abandoned the game before the start of the second half when fighting broke out in the stands.

Buenos Aires: One child was killed, about a hundred people were wounded and 139 arrested in football-related violence at the end of Argentina's first division championship.

- A one-year-old boy died after being hit by a stray bullet as supporters in a Buenos Aires suburb fired guns to celebrate the first title success for Boca Juniors for 11 years. Fifteen policemen were

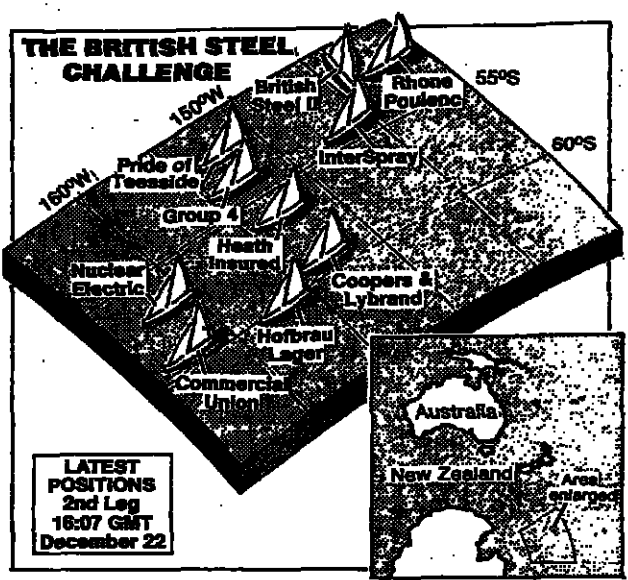
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the latest weather charts suggest that a high pressure system will reduce the Roaring Forties and Screaming Sixties to little more than a whimper for the remainder of the week. Race organisers expect the first yacht to reach Hobart around January 6.

LEADING POSITIONS (at 15.00 GMT yesterday, with miles to Hobart): 1, Commercial Union (R Menzies), 1:38.5; 2, Nuclear Electric (G Childers), 1:50.7; 3, J. & J. (J. & J. Jones), 2:00.0; 4, Lybrand (V Chery), 2:18.5; 5, Pride of Teesdale (I MacGinnis), 2:28.4; 6, Heath (J. & J. Jones), 2:30.0; 7, Group Securitas (M Giddings), 2:37.1; 8, Interspace (P Jellies), 2:52.6; 9, Rhine-Potter (G Phillips), 2:58.0; Harbord, British Steel (J. & J. Jones), 3:00.0.

This date is quoted by RT.



The cold weather has caused the postponement of the Regal Trophy third-round tie between Bradford Northern and Widnes tonight. It has been rescheduled for next Tuesday and if play is not possible at Odsal, it is likely to be switched to either Valley Parade or Headingley.

St Helens have rejected an offer from Wigan to switch their first division match on Sunday to Central Park if the Knowsley Road pitch is unfit.

Wigan, whose ground has no undersoil heating, wanted to avoid a postponement because of a possible future connection

The Indian federation is seeking new dates from the international federation and

RANKINGS: Men: 1, J Suprianto (Indo); 2, Rashid Sidek (Malaysia); 3, A B Kusum (Indo); 4, A Wiranata (Indo); 5, H Susanto (Indo); 6, T Suer-Laundien (Dm); 7, Wu Wenli (China); 8, A Heryanto (Indo); 9, Lu Jun (China); 10, B Suprianto (Indo). Women: 1, S Susanto (Indo); 2, Sang So-hyun (S Kor); 3, Tang Juihong (China); 4, S Kusumawardhani (Indo); 5, Lim Xiaoqing (Swe); 6, Ye Zhaoqing (China); 7, Lee Heung-soon (S Kor); 8, C Magnusson (Swe); 9, S Japenah (Indo); 10, Y Karika

	Depth (cm)	Conditions Piste	Runs to resort	Weather	Temp °C	Last snow fall
FRANCE						
Chamonix	30 300	good	open	sunny	3C	12/12
	(Good skiing on hardpacked snow. 4 lifts / 57 pistes open)					
La Clusaz	25 150	good	open	fair	1C	10/12
	(Best skiing on upper slopes. 46 lifts / 56 pistes open)					
Les Menuires	40 150	good	open	fair	2C	12/12
	(Cross country trails open. 52 lifts / 57 pistes open)					
Tignes	120 350	good	open	sunny	0C	12/12
	(Deep, hard-packed snow at all levels. Most lifts/pistes open)					
Val d'Isère	25 170	fair	open	sunny	-2C	12/12
	(Best skiing on upper slopes. 15 lifts open)					
AUSTRIA						
Garmisch	30 60	fair	open	cloudy	2C	12/12
	(Snow cover thin on lower slopes. 54 lifts / 45 pistes open)					
Seefeld	30 75	good	open	bright	2C	12/12
	(Some artificial snow on lower slopes. 60/85 lifts open)					
St. Anton	30 250	fair	open	bright	1C	12/12
	(Best skiing above middle station. All lifts / pistes open)					
SWITZERLAND						
Crans Montana	30 350	good	open	sunny	3C	12/12
	(Good skiing on hard bases. 33/40 lifts open)					
Lenzerheide	30 150	open	open	sunny	0C	10/12
	(Good skiing throughout resort. All lifts / pistes open)					
Les Diablerets	20 370	good	open	sunny	-5C	11/12
	(Good skiing at all levels, best on glacier)					
Saas Fee	50 190	good	open	sunny	0C	12/12
	(Dry snow on all slopes. 22 lifts / 30 pistes)					
ITALY						
Cortina	120 250	good	open	sunny	-3C	7/12
	(Good skiing. 21 lifts / all 25 pistes open)					
Livigno	35 250	fair	open	cloudy	-1C	12/12
	(Lower slopes hard. 25 lifts / 73 pistes open)					
Mont Campitello	60 120	good	open	sunny	—	5/12
	(Best skiing in mountains. 22 lifts and all pistes open)					
Sanza d'Ossola	60 130	good	open	clear	1C	9/12
	(Artificial snow on lower slopes. All 23 lifts open)					
SPAIN						
Valcenis	20 110	good	open	cloudy	1C	12/12
	(Dry snow on groomed pistes. 6 lifts / 17 pistes open)					

Information supplied by Hot Hotline

Ranatunga stays
Cricket: Arjuna Ranatunga has been retained as Sri Lanka's captain for the visit of England in March.

[illegible]

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE (NFL):
Dallas Cowboys 41, Atlanta Falcons 17.

SWIMMING

SPEEDO BRITISH GRAND PRIX
RANKINGS (leaders after two rounds):
Men: Sprint freestyle: M Foster (Barnet)
Cottrell and P Howe (City of Birmingham),
52pts. Distance freestyle: Howe, 61.
Backstroke: G Robins (Parsmouth
Northsea), 63. Breaststroke: M Williams
(Barnet Cottrell), 58. Butterfly: Foster, 62.
Women: Sprint: M Foster (Barnet Cottrell), 52pts.
Distance: M Dinning (Barnet Cottrell),
54. Distance freestyle: A Pandorf (Buck-
ingham), 61. Backstroke: H Slater (Wentons
of Warrington), 64. Breaststroke: K Rake
(Mossley), 54. Butterfly: S Dykes (City of
Christal), 55.5. Maddy; Slater, 68.

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Hartford Whalers 6, Montreal Canadiens 2; New York Rangers 3, New Jersey Devils 0; Washington Capitals 4, Chicago Blackhawks 1; Pittsburgh Penguins 3, Quebec Nordiques 1; Winnipeg Jets 5, San Jose Sharks 4; Calgary Flames 3, Edmonton Oilers 2.

HENRIEN LEAGUE
 Premier division

	W	D	L	F	Pts
Cardiff	14	11	1	2124	70
Whitby Bay	18	10	0	2134/44	20
Munseyville	18	9	1	6148/18	11
North York	18	9	0	1181/18	11
Bracknell	17	7	4	8125	95
Humberstone	15	7	0	8184	88
Peterborough	15	7	0	8103/05	108
Northampton	16	6	2	8116/26	148
Durham	16	6	2	8116/26	148
Billingham	18	4	3	11128/27	11

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Philadelphia

RUGBY UNION
CLUB MATCH: Cancelled: Moseley v Worcester and Harford.
TENNIS
GOVENTRY: LTA Reebok tour event: Quarter-finals: Micr. C Willinson (Herts) bt D Sanders (Somerset), 4-6, 6-2, 5-4; J Hunter (Surrey) bt D Kirk (Lincoln), 6-4, 2-6, 6-3; P Hand (Berkis) bt D Ireland (Leics), 7-6, 6-2; A Foster (Staffs) bt N West (Hants), 6-3, 3-6, 6-2. Women: J Ward (Widling) bt L Crook (Derby), 6-2, 6-5; A Simpkin (Leics) bt S A Smith (Dorset), 6-3, 3-6, 6-2. A van Buren (Hull) bt V Luke (Staffs), 7-6, 6-4; G Cooregal (Holt) bt A Smith (Dorset), 3-6, 6-2.
CORAL GABLES, Florida: Orange Bowl

CRICKET

CASTLE COUP Johannesburg: Transvaal 289 and 234-6; Cape 160 and 177 (Jack 4-47). Transvaal won by 186 runs.

PROTECTOR: Northern Transvaal 385 and 101; Free State 246 and 243-6 (Ri Steyn 101 out). Free State won by four wickets.

TOUR: Western Province 276 and 205; Eastern Province 350 and 134-2. Eastern Province won by eight wickets.

BOXING

BUENOS AIRES: World Bantam Association light-middleweight championship. Victor Osofsky (USA) defeated Joe Hickox (Namibia) Unanimous, 151 m.p.

	P	W	L	F	A	P
Su Razerz.....	8	8	0	24	3	2
West Coast.....	8	7	1	23	5	2
Jets.....	8	6	2	18	9	2
Coastal.....	8	5	3	17	12	2

Glasgow Women's first division					
	P	W	L	F	A
Compton's Bureau	8	8	0	24	3
Glasgow P.	8	7	1	22	3
Jells	8	5	3	17	12
S. Hazelhead	8	5	3	19	14
Garragebung	8	4	4	13	17
Edinburgh Univ.	8	3	5	12	19
Pentland	8	2	6	12	20
Coatbridge	8	2	6	8	19
Paisley	8	0	8	3	24

Whitlock appeared to have rescued the newly shaped English men's championship yesterday when he gained unanimous approval from fellow professionals about a suggestion to commit to any further men's national events offering agreed minimum prize funds while deciding about entry this year without prejudice to national selection.

Marshall was among players who contacted the SRA to agree that the position negotiated by Whitlock offered a platform to promote a significant event in future.

According to Chris Gotla, "the professional game in England." Gotla said last night.

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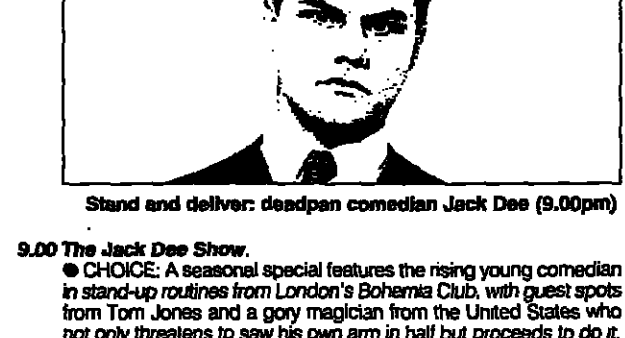
Commentary
Call 0891 500 123

Results
Call 0891 100 123

Calls at 36p per min chess rate.

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 *Cartoons* (93120) 7.00 *The Big Breakfast* (75149)
- 9.00 *Yip! Be! You! Life*. Game show hosted by Bill Cosby (s) (9432101)
- 9.25 *Laurel and Hardy*. Cartoon version (5005033) 9.30 *Sesame Street*. Early learning series (44859)
- 10.30 *Film: Charlie Chaplin Cavalcade* (3938, b/w). Four shorts from Chaplin's period at Mutual — *One AM*, *The Pawnshop*, *The Floorwalker* and *The Trick* (47897)
- 12.00 *The Lorax*. A Dr Seuss animation about the disastrous effects of man's greed on the environment (99168)
- 12.30 *Famous People, Famous Places*. Quiz game introduced by William G. Stewart (52531)
- 1.00 *The Anne of Green Gables Series: The Sequel*. Anne (Megan Follows) is now an adult and determined to be a writer, but failure to find a publisher depresses her and she leaves her boyfriend (Jonathan Crombie) to become a teacher far from Prince Edward Island (r) (91013656)
- 3.20 *Morty's Disappearing Bag*. Animation about a young rabbit rejected by his older brother and sister at Christmas (7685930)
- 3.30 *Transformations*. The last of four programmes examining our relationships with the world around us. The subject is death. Among those taking part are scientist David Lorimer, the Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa and hospice founder Dame Cecily Saunders (57523)
- 4.30 *Rarg*. Animated adventures narrated by Nigel Hawthorn (r) (439)
- 5.00 *Film: A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1989) starring Keaton Knight Pulliam. Moderate television version of Mark Twain's tale of a ten-year-old girl who is knocked out by a ball from a horse and transported back to the court of King Arthur in Camelot. With Emma Samms and Jean Marsh. Directed by Mel Daniels (96352630)
- 6.45 *Air Pirates of the Outback*. Puppet animation from Australia (187897)
- 7.00 *Channel 4 News*. (Teletext) Weather (159830)
- 7.50 *Comment*. Goshawk pinnel argues for seasonal sympathy for the Royal Family (373052)
- 8.00 *Brookside*. Typical drama serial set in a suburban Merseyside close. (Teletext) (s) (3187)
- 8.30 *The Feast of Christmas*. In the last of the series Paul Levy enjoys Twelfth Night wassailing in Somerset and samples Claudia Roden's Moroccan Christmas snake. (Teletext) (2052)



night. He is a promising water-performer who has won a cult following with his dry humour and deadpan style. Although he does a passable imitation of John Major, and slips in the odd Fergie joke, much of his material is drawn from the frustrations of everyday life, such as standing in bank queues or breaking down on the motorway. In this respect, he is a little like the comedian of Jasper Carrott, except that he does without a stool. But it is unlikely that Dee or his fans would welcome the comparison (2149)

10.00 Pallas 2. Spoof soap (s) (419120)

10.25 The Golden Girls. Blanche and Sophia claim they have experienced close encounters of the spiritual kind – but nobody will believe them. Starring Bea Arthur, Rue McClanahan, Betty White and the Gals (2149) (s) (434120)

10.55 Film: Police (1984). The Gérard Depardieu season concludes with this thriller about an uncompromising policeman who, while investigating a drugs operation, falls for the girlfriend of one of the suspects. Directed by Maurice Pialat. In French with English subtitles (24512997)

1.00am Westminster 123. Comedy series set in Roman Britain (t) (s) (3921502)

1.35 Pallas 2. Shown at 10.00pm (9365705)

2.00 The Twilight Zone: Ninety Years without Slumbering (2.25)
A tale of the supernatural starring Ed Wynn (1540298). Ends at c.w.

3.30 Drag Racing
(3830) **4.30 Men**
Off Road Race

[illegible]

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British tennis dealt further blow

Brighton event's loss of sponsor deepens gloom

BY ANDREW LONGMORE, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH tennis was dealt another blow yesterday when Midland Bank pulled out of its sponsorship of the women's indoor tournament in Brighton after five years. The move, which was made for "policy" reasons, came as a surprise to the Lawn Tennis Association and to George Hendon, the tournament director, and adds to the growing concern over the future, not just of the \$375,000 event in October, but of the financial structure of the British tennis calendar.

"It's a big blow, there is no doubt about that," John Feaver, the LTA tournament director, said yesterday. "Big-time tennis is becoming very expensive and Midland have decided they want to shift the emphasis of their sponsorship, but the tournament is making money now and that gives us hope for finding a replacement."

This year, sponsors have already withdrawn from backing the pre-Wimbledon women's championships at Eastbourne and Birmingham, while the Diet Pepsi men's indoor tournament was sold to Antwerp after incurring heavy losses. Should Brighton not find a backer, there could be no international-class tennis in Britain for 11 months of the year.

"It's got to be worrying," Feaver said. "If things don't pick up in the new year, it will become very tricky indeed. We have lost quite a few events in the last five years and the calendar is already looking a little thin." While Volkswagen have replaced Pilkington Glass as sponsors of the championships in Eastbourne in the week before Wimbledon, no sponsor has been found for the former Dow Classic at Edgbaston in June.

Midland's decision to withdraw came just three months

after the company had indicated, at the end of the 1992 championships won by Steffi Graf for the sixth time, it would continue sponsorship for another year at least.

"I was surprised by the announcement," Hendon said. "But we shall just have to find someone else to carry the flag. It's a tournament that is certainly going places. There is money for sponsorship of quality events, but the recession is making it very difficult."

Midland, which took over from Pretty Polly as title sponsors five years ago, has invested £1.5 million in the championships, but the good news for the LTA, at least, is that the bank intends to continue its involvement with grass-roots tennis, supporting the national junior championships and the schools competition.

"The people who look after our sponsorship policy want to spend more on community-based activities, not on high-profile international events. It is a new direction for us. We are not pulling out of tennis altogether," Alan Furniss, manager of sponsorship and donations for Midland, said.

Whatever the reasons for the withdrawal, Midland has guided the tournament through a difficult period when interest was sustained largely by the presence of Graf, who has won the title for six of the last seven years and joined such distinguished champions as Martina Navratilova, Chris Evert and Gabriela Sabatini on the roll of honour since Brighton first hosted the event in 1978.

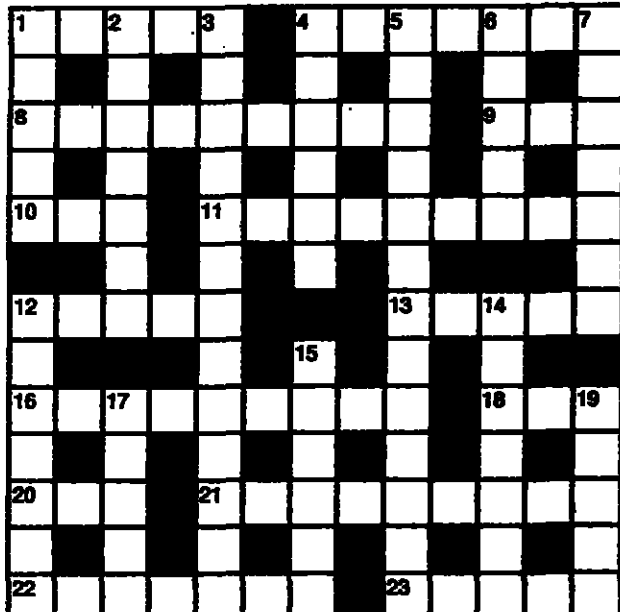
This year's field, which included four of the top 10, was the strongest for many years. "It's a good product," Feaver said. "We have a guaranteed draw and guaranteed television, so I would be confident of finding a new sponsor. But there is not that much time."

Even if the tournament did not get backing for 1993, the LTA would almost certainly underwrite it for a year. The wider implications for the structure of the women's game are equally worrying. Next year, 13 events on the Kraft tour will have prize-money of \$750,000, but many of the smaller tournaments are finding it difficult to make ends meet.



Graf: six-time winner

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2978



ACROSS

- 1 Islamic ruler (5)
- 4 Academic (7)
- 5 US St Paul state (9)
- 9 Greated (3)
- 10 Coast inlet (3)
- 11 Elizabeth I favourite (9)
- 12 Leather strap (5)
- 13 Available (2,3)
- 16 Stadium gate (9)
- 18 Pea case (3)
- 20 Ship's record (3)
- 21 Deceitful (9)
- 22 Take over from (7)
- 23 The Creation composer (5)

DOWN

- 1 Good prospect (5)
- 2 Not recently (4,3)
- 3 Weak movement (6,7)
- 4 Impassive (6)
- 5 Worldly paradise (6,2,5)
- 6 Extent (5)
- 7 Rodent snare (3,4)
- 12 Gossiper (7)
- 14 Bush shaping (7)
- 15 Centre (6)
- 17 Kingly (5)
- 19 Murdered (3,2)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 2977

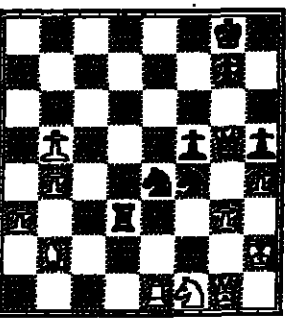
ACROSS: 1 Specie 5 Damage 8 Brew 9 Popinjay
10 Physic 12 Soft 15 Peace and quiet 16 Syle 17 Meekly
19 Traction 21 Wand 22 Stewed 23 Sinter

DOWN: 2 Parchment 3 Cow 4 Special 5 Dope 6 Minuscule 7 Goa 11 Sacred cow 13 Predance 14 Oddments
18 Find 20 Rut 21 Wit

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WINNING MOVE

This position is a variation from the game Smyslov - Kosten, Foreign & Colonial Hastings Premier 1988/89. Tony Kosten qualified for the Premier tournament by winning the previous year's Challengers tournament. He demonstrated his strength by winning an early game against former world champion Vassily Smyslov. How can black force a quick checkmate? British grandmasters Nunn and Speelman will be among the eight players in the top section of this year's Hastings tournament. Further details from the British Chess Federation on 0424 442500 (Raymond Keene). Solution on page 28.



WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

SQUAREHEAD

- a. An American brigantine
- b. An idiot
- c. An honest person

WALPURGITE

- a. A junior member of a cove
- b. A yellow crystal
- c. The midnight rose

PENNI

- a. The Finnish penny
- b. An Amerindian tribe and language
- c. A vestigial wing in reptiles

REDUND

- a. To make redundant
- b. The backwash of a wave
- c. A red German hound

Answers on page 28



Eye on the title: Harry Foster, of Harrow, the favourite, won the senior event of the public schools rackets championship, the Foster Cup, in impressive style yesterday, defeating Gareth Rees, of Clifton, in straight games.

Foster, who had scarcely been extended throughout the championship, served well and was too good off the back wall for his hard-hitting opponent. Despite a brief rally in the third game, the powerful Rees was always under pressure from an opponent whose natural talent and fine strokeplay more than compensated for occasional lapses of footwork.

Results page 30

Scarborough hope for live television windfall

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

IF ARSENAL were cursing yesterday's postponement of tonight's Coca-Cola Cup fifth-round tie at Scarborough, then the underdogs from the third division were ready to celebrate.

The decision to call off the game owing to the deep frost that has affected Scarborough's Seamer Road pitch has left Arsenal with the prospect of two treacherous cup trips in the space of four days. The game has now been switched to January 6, immediately after Arsenal travel to Yeovil, the most famous giant-killer of them all, in the FA Cup and, though the respite will give the Highbury medical staff extra time to clear up a crop of niggling injuries, it puts their season on a knife-edge.

For Scarborough, though, the delay could prove richly rewarding. The new date means the tie may now be televised live, since it better suits the demands of the television companies, and that will bring Scarborough an approximate £100,000 windfall if the game, already a sell-out, is screened.

"Under the agreement, clubs do not receive extra money for recorded programmes from the ITV companies, but there is a substantial fee for live games," Geoffrey Richmond, the club chairman, said. "Should it be on TV live, it would mean this particular club has a golden rather than silver lining for us."

Arsenal's mood is decidedly less optimistic. They will need

no reminding that it was on January 4 this year that Wrexham humiliated them in last season's FA Cup and their first-team coach, Stewart Houston, said yesterday: "We've just got to make sure we approach both games with the right attitude. The disappointment is that it has been put back another two weeks and threatens a build-up of fixtures."

While cold weather has reduced the scheduled midweek fixture list, the Premier League is confident of promoting an unscheduled Boxing Day programme. Ironically, the only club with any doubts is Nottingham Forest, the club waiting to play the winners of the Scarborough v Arsenal game in the Coca-Cola Cup quarter-finals.

Kharin cleared to play for Chelsea

CHELSEA'S Russian recruit, Dmitri Kharin, could be in Premier League action before the start of the new year. The goalkeeper from the CSKA Moscow club is due to make his bow in English football in the Oxford Combination game at Oxford tonight, following the receipt of his international clearance.

Kharin, first choice for the CIS first during the European championships last summer, has cost Chelsea a fee of £200,000. Additional money to be paid to his former club will depend on the number of appearances he makes.

Kharin's availability leaves the Chelsea manager, Ian Porterfield, with a tough decision to make. Kevin Hitchcock, who was brought into the side when David Beasant was dropped in September, has conceded only 12 goals in 17 games during a run that has seen Chelsea rise to fifth in the table.

Hitchcock, 30, signed a new two-year contract soon after Beasant was left out after making two bad errors in the game against Norwich. Tranmere's former Chelsea player, the Scottish international Pat Nevin, is fit again eight days after a keyhole operation for appendicitis and is likely to play against Millwall on Boxing Day.

Christie defends stance on drugs

LINFORD Christie, the Olympic 100 metres champion, yesterday insisted athletics was cleaning up its act as his former training partner, Jason Livingston, braced himself for the decision today on his disciplinary hearing over drug-taking.

Christie was also critical of the Sports Council, citing their bad timing of releasing news of Livingston's positive drugs test when the Olympic team was already in Barcelona. He made his comments as the British Athletic Federation's drugs advisory group was meeting to consider the recommendations of the disciplinary committee, which on Monday heard Livingston's plea that he was innocent of any drugs offence.

If the verdict goes against Livingston, 21, he would be the highest profile British athlete to be banned for failing a test and could be sidelined from the sport for four years.

But Christie claimed athletics was wrongly portrayed as being rife with drugs problems. "Every time there's a problem, it always goes down to track and field. It's only because of athletics' high profile that we are always singled out, but there are a lot of sports a lot worse than ours."

"It's about time people realised this. Why should we always be criticised for actually doing a good job trying to clean up our sport?"

Christie, the captain of the British team in Barcelona, would not be drawn on his thoughts about Livingston, his fellow sprinter who was sent home from Barcelona after a pre-Games drugs test was revealed to be positive for the anabolic steroid, Methandianone. "It's nothing to do with me. The verdict is tomorrow and I wouldn't want to say anything to prejudice the result," he said.

But Christie added: "All I can say is that the problem in Barcelona should not have been a problem for the Olympic team. The news shouldn't have come out there. Why did it take the Sports Council so long to do what they did?"

Meanwhile, other British sprinters were eager for the Livingston case to be cleared up. Jamie Baulch, one of the teenage quartet who won the world junior 4 x 100 metres relay title in Seoul, said: "I felt it should have been sorted out straight away. I'm surprised it's dragged on so long."

Award winners, page 28

New Ferrari fails test at the first hurdle

Fiorano, Italy: Ferrari's new Formula One car broke down before it reached the test track yesterday. An oil cooler on the hydraulic suspension circuit failed as soon as the Ferrari 644-B model was switched on and the test session had to be cancelled.

The breakdown clearly frustrated the team's French driver, Jean Alesi, and a group of Ferrari followers, who had come to see the car put through its paces.

"The problem may have occurred because it was so cold," a Ferrari spokesman, Giancarlo Baccini, said. "We

have to carry out a number of tests now, but, hopefully, we can get the car on the track tomorrow afternoon. Otherwise, we will have to put things off until after Christmas."

Baccini added that the planned presentation of the car to the press on Wednesday morning would go ahead. The car is a modified version of the model that Ferrari raced last season.

The Italian team, the most glamorous in the sport, recorded the last of its 103 Formula One race victories in the Spanish grand prix in 1990. Since then, however,

they have struggled to keep pace with the British teams, McLaren and Williams.

Their latest model has been constructed with the approval of the British designer John Barnard, who returned to Ferrari as head of research and development last July. The 644-B has a reshaped body and a new suspension system. The team have abandoned experiments with a flatter-bottomed aerodynamic design. It is seen as a stop-gap measure while Barnard prepares its successor, which Ferrari hope to have ready by July.

Organisers have set aside dates for a French motorcycle grand prix next year in the hope that the cancelled race could be reinstated following government compromises on its tough anti-tobacco advertising laws.

The International Motorcycling Federation (FIM) believes recent moves, including an amendment by the French government allowing television coverage of foreign races showing tobacco advertising, was a promising sign that the Magny Cours event could yet be staged. (Agencies)

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The Times tomorrow presents its Jumbo Christmas Sports Crossword the annual test of your knowledge of

the facts and trivia of sport. An array of prizes includes tickets for England's World Cup football matches at Wem-

bley, the England v Scotland rugby union match at Twickenham and the European grand prix at Donington.